

# Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies

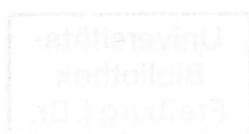
Publications

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# RHETORIC IN BYZANTIUM

Papers from the Thirty-fifth Spring Symposium  
of Byzantine Studies, Exeter College,  
University of Oxford, March 2001



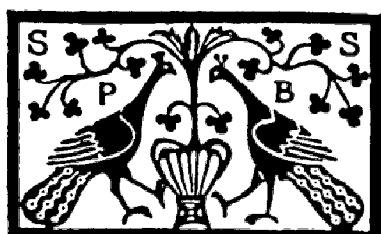
edited by  
Elizabeth Jeffreys

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## Abbreviations

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
BF	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
BHG	<i>Biblioteca Hagiographica Graeca</i>
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
BNJ	<i>Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher</i>
BSI	<i>Byzantinoslavica</i>
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
CA	<i>Cahiers archéologiques</i>
CCM	<i>Cahiers de civilisation médiévale</i>
CPG	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
DIEEE	<i>Deltion tes Historikes kai Ethnologikes Hetaireias tes Hellados</i>
DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
EEBS	<i>Epeteris Hetaireias Byzantinon Spoudon</i>
EPh	<i>Ekklesiastikos Pharos</i>
GBL	K. Krumbacher, <i>Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur</i> (Munich, 1897)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
HPL	H. Hunger, <i>Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner</i> , 2 vols. (Munich, 1978)
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JÖB	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
JRSt	<i>Journal of Religious Studies</i>
Lampe	G.W. Lampe, <i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> (Oxford, 1968)
LBG	<i>Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität</i> , ed. E. Trapp (Vienna, 1994– )
LS-J	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott and S. Stuart Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (9th ed., Oxford, 1940, 1996)
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, <i>Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio</i> (Florence-Leipzig, 1759–1962)
MB	K.N. Sathas, <i>Mesaionike Bibliothek</i> , 7 vols. (Paris-Venice, 1872–94)
NE	<i>Neos Hellenomnemon</i>
NPNF	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
ODB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i>
PLP	<i>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</i> , ed. E. Trapp et al. (Vienna, 1976–1996),
PW	<i>Pauly-Wissowa Real-Encyclopädie</i>

REArm	<i>Revue des Etudes Arméniennes</i>
REB	<i>Revue des Etudes Byzantines</i>
RSBN	<i>Rivista de Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici</i>
TAPS	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Society</i>
TLG	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i>
TM	<i>Travaux et Mémoires</i>

Frequently cited texts:

- Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg): A. Heisenberg, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1903, repr. with corrections by P. Wirth, Stuttgart, 1978)
- Niketas Choniates (ed. van Dieten): J.L. van Dieten, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* (Berlin, 1975)
- Gregoras (ed. Schopen): L. Schopen, ed., *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1829–55)
- Kantakouzenos (ed. Schopen): L. Schopen, ed., *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri quattuor*, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1828–32)
- Pachymeres (ed. Failler): A. Failler, ed., and V. Laurent, trans., *Georges Pachymérès, Relations historiques*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1984–2000)
- Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Renauld): E. Renauld, ed., *Michel Psellos, Chronographie*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1926–8)
- Skylitzes (ed. Thurn): I. Thurn, ed., *Ioannes Skylitzes, Synopsis historiarum* (Berlin, 1973)
- Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*: L. Spengel, ed., *Rhetores Graeci*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1853–6)
- Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*: C. Walz, ed., *Rhetories Graeci*, 9 vols. (Leipzig, 1832–6)

Classical and patristic authors are cited according to LS-J and Lampe, and the standard editions.

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# Introduction

Elizabeth Jeffreys

'Byzantine' and 'rhetoric' separately are arguably amongst the most abused words in the current English language. Both have connotations of obscurity, obfuscation, and unnecessary complexity. The combination of the two multiplies the problem and produces an expression and a phenomenon at which even Byzantinists have been known to blench. 'Byzantine rhetoric' conjures up turgid sentences, abstruse allusions, and speeches of inordinate length whose basic content could be expressed with much greater clarity in a quarter of the words. However, it is a fact that rhetorical techniques are absolutely fundamental to all Byzantine modes of expression, from the earliest period to the latest. They provided the basic tools for effective speaking and writing, for the presentation of arguments — for communication at every level. They pervaded virtually every element of Byzantine society, much as the techniques, and problems, of the mass media pervade virtually every aspect of society today.

At its simplest, by both modern and ancient or medieval definitions, rhetoric has two dimensions: it is both the art of arranging words and arguments to the most persuasive effect as well as the rules to be observed in producing that effect: a process and its regulations. Both of these have a long history, beginning in the fifth century BC when the first philosophers included enquiries into modes of expression in their investigations into the principles on which the physical world is constructed. However, the first comprehensive analysis of structures of speech came from the taxonomic work of Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> In the world of the Greek city-state there were practical uses for the display of convincing arguments, whether in a citizen assembly or a law court. From these practicalities there developed the three traditional divisions of rhetoric — political, judicial and epideictic (or display oratory). But the circumstances that created this tripartite definition in theory did not last

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<sup>1</sup> The standard surveys of rhetoric in the ancient world remain: W. Kroll, 'Rhetorik', *PW*, Suppl. 7, 1039–138; J. Martin, *Antike Rhetorik: Technik und Methode* (Munich, 1974). Useful also is S.E. Porter, *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period, 330 BC–AD 400* (Leiden, 1997).

in the real world: with the disappearance of the democracies of the city-states political oratory lost any genuine debating function. Forensic rhetoric too dwindled as the courts ceased to be a place for deliberation. Only epideictic oratory, in the form of virtuoso speeches by professional performers, retained an audience, with its heyday in the first centuries AD, in the movement known the Second Sophistic. This is the rhetoric which entered the Byzantine period.

Here other factors come into play, especially the attitude to linguistic registers in the world of the Greek-speaking Mediterranean. As Greek evolved from the Attic of classical Athens, on the one hand it simplified into a spoken *koine* most familiar to us in written form from the New Testament, and on the other there developed a florid bombastic and artificial style much favoured in epideictic displays. Both trends, by different routes, induced a return to a simple, pure Attic (or what was understood as pure Attic), again one of the developments associated with the multi-faceted Second Sophistic. From this there came two effects which had a profound impact on Byzantine attitudes to language use and literary style, and to the role of rhetoric. The first was the sense that the best models for style were not one's literary contemporaries but writers who had flourished deep in the past; and the second was that the spoken language had moved so far from these models that none of its characteristic features should appear on the written page.<sup>2</sup> These attitudes had social implications. States need administrators able to communicate clearly, that is, individuals who have been trained in rhetoric. Hence, in a society which did not prize practical skills highly, the higher reaches of the Byzantine education process consisted of ever more complex exercises in literary composition, a proven career path for ambitious young men.

From this came the need for handbooks. The best known, the most frequently used and the most frequently copied and commented on are those of Hermogenes, Menander and Aphthonios.<sup>3</sup> Their dates range from the second to the fifth centuries AD. Of the five works attributed to Hermogenes (late second century AD) in the Byzantine tradition the most read were the *On Staseis* or *On Issues* (on the logical positions that can be taken for debating purposes) and the *On Forms* or *On Ideas*, that is, on features of style. Menander (late third century) wrote treatises on types of epideictic speeches, and his rules for formal ceremonial speeches — for the praise of rulers, for the reception of ambassadors, and so forth — were

<sup>2</sup> On attitudes to style, see I. Ševčenko, 'Levels of style in Byzantine prose', *JÖB* 31 (1981), 289–312. On language development, see G. Horrocks, *Greek: a history of the language and its speakers* (London, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Usefully discussed in G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1973), 5–26.

given attention right up to the end of the Byzantine era. Aphthonios (late fourth century) wrote what became the classic text book on *progymnasmata*, that is, the small constitutive elements that make up narratives and continuous prose of all varieties. The fourteen elements he defined, with examples, are: the fable (*mythos*), the tale (*diegema*), the moral saying (*chreia*), the proverb (*gnome*), the refutation (*anaskeue*), the confirmation (*kataskeue*), the commonplace (*koinos topos*), the praise (*enkomion*), the vituperation (*psogos*), the comparison (*synkrisis*), the characterization (*ethopoiia*), the description (*ekphrasis*), the thesis (*thesis*), and the proposal of a law (*eisphora nomou*).<sup>4</sup> The *progymnasmata* will make a frequent appearance in the papers of this volume, and knowledge of them can arguably be used as a defining element in assessing degrees of literacy in Byzantium.

The writings of these three critics and theorists form the core of Byzantine textbooks on rhetoric and were widely influential, though Menander's work does not have a particularly extensive manuscript tradition. These handbooks pose a problem to apologists for Byzantine society who complain that images of its static unchanging nature are a rhetorical delusion imposed on us by the Byzantines themselves, and who support the alternative picture of development and adaptation. It is salutary to realize that the corpus of texts on which, for example, Maximos Planoudes commented in the late thirteenth century in his *Peri Rhetorikes*, undoubtedly for teaching purposes, is precisely the corpus which had been commented on before him by Sopatros (in the fourth century), by John Doxapatres and by John Sikeliotes (in the eleventh century) as well as by many anonymous writers. And it is this same corpus that will be commented on again after Planoudes by, for example, Joseph Rhakendytes, his younger contemporary. Planoudes has some reassuringly sensible statements on the nature of rhetoric and its purposes: 'rhetoric is the art that deals with the power of the word in political matters, whose purpose is persuasive argument against the prevailing view'.<sup>5</sup> But it is disconcerting to realize that he is using virtually the same phrases that had been first used by an anonymous commentator of the sixth century. The rules inculcated by the handbooks penetrated deep into the Byzantine authorial psyche, as the papers in this volume indicate. They led to authorial approaches, choices of structure and content, and writerly tricks which the modern reader has to understand, allow for and, if possible, decode, in order to see what the Byzantine writer was up to and to work out as much as possible of the real message.

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<sup>4</sup> Recent work in English on these includes: R.F. Hock and E.N. O'Neil, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric* (Atlanta, 1986) and G.A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek textbooks of prose composition introductory to the study of rhetoric* (Fort Collins, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> H. Rabe, ed., *Prolegomenon Sylloge* (Leipzig, 1931), 64.

However, for all the centrality of rhetoric in Byzantine culture the topic remains remarkably under-investigated today. Despite the magisterial survey of texts and authors in Herbert Hunger's *Handbuch der byzantinische hochsprachliche Literatur*<sup>6</sup> more general studies are few. In English the most useful (and referred to frequently in this volume) are George Kustas' *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, several studies by G.A. Kennedy<sup>7</sup> and Averil Cameron's *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*.<sup>8</sup> Inspection of the subject index in the on-line catalogue of the Bodleian Library in Oxford produces around 1456 items listed under the general heading 'rhetoric', but just two under 'Byzantine rhetoric'. This is indicative of the state of the field: 'rhetoric' is an important subject but one which Byzantinists are too inclined to avoid. Recent studies on Hermogenes, for example, by Heath and (slightly earlier) by Patterson focus on his role in late antiquity and the Italian Renaissance respectively, leaving a large void where his role in Byzantium should come.<sup>9</sup> Thus it is perhaps not surprising, if rather embarrassing, that there are very few modern editions of the core texts.<sup>10</sup> While there are a number of Teubner editions put out in the early years of the twentieth century under the aegis of Hugo Rabe, which include editions of the works attributed to Hermogenes and Aphthonios and other significant theorists, together with a few commentators,<sup>11</sup> most of the Byzantine material is available only in the collections published by Walz in the 1830s and Spengel in the 1850s, both multi-volumed sets, both with the title *Rhetores Graeci*.<sup>12</sup>

This is the background against which the discussions in the symposium were set, and which informs the papers that follow in this volume. The first section is designed to explore how rhetorical rules, having been learned, were applied by Byzantine students and writers. Martha Vinson demonstrates how revealing it can be to read a saint's life through the filter of an imperial oration. Charlotte Roueché detects an

<sup>6</sup> HPL, vol. 1, 65–196.

<sup>7</sup> G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, 1983); *idem*, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition* (London, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Berkeley, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> M. Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues: strategies of argument in later Greek rhetoric* (Oxford, 1995); A.M. Patterson, *Hermogenes and the Renaissance: seven ideas of style* (Princeton, 1970).

<sup>10</sup> The edition of Menander by D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson (*Menander Rhetor, On Epideictic* [Oxford, 1981]) is a heartening exception, as is the edition by M. Patillon of Theon's *progymnasmata* (Paris, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1913). *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1926). Commentators: for example, John of Sardis, *Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1928).

<sup>12</sup> Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* includes, for example, Psellos' *Peri rhetorikes*. Walz, *Rhetories Graeci* includes, amongst others, the commentaries of John Doxopates, John Sikeliotes, Maximos Planoudes and Joseph Rhakendytes.

awareness of *progymnasmata* in an author who makes no claim to high style. Costas Constantinides explains how, and by whom, knowledge of rhetorical techniques was fostered in late Byzantium while Dimiter Angelov shows how the panegyric became hortatory in the same period. The papers in the second section deal with the rhetorical devices used on public occasions, when the performance element was to the fore. Two deal with poetry produced for the court — Wolfram Hörandner exploring the continuity of devices found in several poets over the centuries and Michael Jeffreys decoding those of one sample poet — while Mary Cunningham discusses a strategy much used in the pulpit, though less prominent in the handbooks. The third section is intended to introduce an element of reception: how does an awareness of the rules of rhetoric affect *our* reading of Byzantine texts? Jakov Ljubarsky and Margaret Mullett come to rather different answers. Ruth Webb argues that epideictic oratory can be read in more than one way, while Erich Trapp demonstrates some of the implications of lexical inventiveness. The fourth section focuses on one particular branch of literature, historiography, and the possible roles that rhetoric has played in historians' approaches to their material: Mary Whitby discusses George of Pisidia's verbal dexterity, Catherine Holmes looks at Skylitzes' stereotyping and finds a rhetoric of synopsis, while Ruth Macrides argues that Akropolites' manipulative narrative has been unchallenged for too long. The fifth section moves from the verbal arena and explores the interaction between the formalities of the written word and visual expression. Henry Maguire discusses this in connection with images from the New Testament, Robin Cormack probes semantic complexities while Leslie Brubaker concentrates on the manuscript page.

A volume of this sort can have no pretensions to completeness. It can raise only a small proportion of the issues that might be discussed. Its purposes will have been served if the attention of some of the readers of Byzantine texts and viewers of Byzantine art has been more firmly fixed on the authorial strategies of the creators. Hopefully they will also be supplied with insights into the tools with which to analyse the questions which arise.



Section I  
The uses of rhetoric





# 1. Rhetoric and writing strategies in the ninth century

Martha Vinson

At an early stage in my work on the translation of the *Life with Encomium of the Blessed and Holy Empress Theodora* (BHG 1731), I consulted a historian friend on the subject of the Byzantine bride shows, which was one of the many problems posed by this *vita*. I noted that the primary sources for this phenomenon included some very interesting specimens of Byzantine rhetoric and I expressed my amazement that nobody had really paid much attention to the rhetorical aspects of the problem. I then asked him how he, as a historian, dealt with the role of rhetoric in historical sources. 'Oh', he says. 'Rhetoric? No problem. What you do is, you take out all the rhetorical parts and what you have left are the facts'.

Now the view that rhetoric is at best irrelevant and at worst an obstacle and impediment to objective truth is no doubt quite common, but few are as honest about it as my benighted colleague. This is not to deny that the frustration many feel in working with highly rhetorical texts is both genuine and justified, but the underlying cause of this frustration should be seen in cultural rather than moral or philosophical terms. As scholars, we like to do our own thinking and we approach our sources with a view to extracting the raw data that will allow us to make up our own minds. Like Sgt. Jack Friday on the old Dragnet show, what we want are, 'Just the facts, ma'am'. Unfortunately, what we want from Byzantine sources and what we actually get are often two entirely different things. A good example of this disparity in expectations occurs in accounts of the death of the Empress Theodora. In her *vita*, Theodora dies in an unspecified location surrounded by her loved ones, including her son Michael III. Elsewhere, however, it is Theodora who survives to lament over the corpse of her son after his assassination.<sup>1</sup> That the Byzantines could tolerate such discrepancies in something so basic as the date, place, and circumstances of death illustrates very clearly how great is the divide between us.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See further M. Vinson, 'St Theodora the Empress', in A.-M. Talbot, ed., *Byzantine Defenders of Images: eight saints' lives in English translation* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 381–2, n. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Similar observations may be made about the relationship between rhetorical descriptions or *ekphraseis* of buildings and the actual monuments themselves. See, for example,

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In cases like these, it would be well to remember that rhetoric is, after all, the art of persuasion. Its primary purpose is thus not to convey unambiguous pieces of information in a neutral or unbiased way, but rather to articulate a particular point of view in a persuasive manner. In this scheme of things, the specific details of who, what, when, and where are readily sacrificed or subordinated to the larger questions of how and why. That rhetoric posed a serious threat to the concept of absolute or objective truth was of course recognized in antiquity.<sup>3</sup> Plato, for example, defined rhetoric as the very antithesis of philosophy, or the pursuit of wisdom, and in this he was following in the footsteps of his mentor, Socrates, who suffered literally fatal consequences as a result of being mistakenly identified as a sophist rather than a philosopher.<sup>4</sup> Yet the caricature of Socrates as a professional rhetorician in Aristophanes' *Clouds* does reflect the intellectual milieu of fifth-century Athens. Hence, while Socrates himself might not have taught youngsters how to make the worse argument defeat the better, there were certainly those who did. Protagoras' *Antilogies* and the anonymous fifth-century treatise called the *Dissoi Logoi*, or *Double Arguments*,<sup>5</sup> indicate quite clearly that from very early on rhetorical truth, as in the case of the death of Theodora, was a matter of opinion, or rather persuasion.

But if rhetoric is not a reliable source of hard facts, what is it good for? Put another way, do Byzantine texts contain useful information and, if so, can one extract it in usable form? The answer on both counts is an unqualified yes. Rhetorical analysis of literary source material can yield valuable data about Byzantine society. To begin with, the mere use of a rhetorical form or strategy can have a significance independent of the content; in other words, there are times when the medium is in fact the message, or a substantial part of it. Secondly, the identification and analysis of a work's compositional structure can help to establish both its date and its relationship to other texts. Finally and most importantly, an understanding of the complex interplay between a work's form and content can shed valuable light on the social, cultural, and political milieu that produced it.

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R. Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton, 1999), 37 who points out that while most of these descriptions are 'remarkably accurate', an *ekphrasis* nonetheless 'emphasized perceptual understanding and is better understood as an expression of spiritual realities than as an archaeological record'.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. M. Gagarin, 'Probability and persuasion: Plato and early Greek rhetoric', in I. Worthington, ed., *Persuasion: Greek rhetoric in action* (London, 1994), 46–68, especially 56–7.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, W.K.C. Guthrie, *Socrates* (Cambridge, 1971), 41–57.

<sup>5</sup> W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge, 1971), 316–19; Gagarin, 'Probability', 63, cites Protagoras' dictum quoted by Diogenes Laertius 9.51: 'there are two opposed sides to every issue'.

The ninth century provides a case in point. This was a period of transition in many ways. Theologically, iconoclasm cast a long shadow over the century as a whole and the restoration of orthodoxy in 843 marked not so much the end of the iconoclastic era as the beginning of the end. Politically, the Amorian dynasty, which bore responsibility both for the revival of iconoclasm under Theophilos and its abolition by his widow Theodora, had come to a violent end with the assassination of their son Michael III in 867. The question of legitimacy facing the new regime headed by Basil I and Leo VI was thus unusually challenging and the dynastic response took several directions. Ecclesiastically, for example, the patriarchal throne became something of a revolving door as Basil I deposed Photios, the candidate of Michael III (858–67), and replaced him with Theodora's patriarch, Ignatios (847–58); following Ignatios' death in office (867–77), he then reinstated Photios (877–86), who was in turn deposed by Leo VI upon his accession.

The propaganda generated by the rivalry between Photios and Ignatios shows very clearly that rhetoric, both as a theoretical concept and a practical skill, played an important role in ninth-century Byzantium. The two patriarchs emerge from Niketas David Paphlagon's *Life of Ignatios* as polarized and polarizing symbols of their age.<sup>6</sup> These portraits, however, are essentially artificial, that is, they are rhetorical constructs resulting from the *synkrisis*, or comparison, between Ignatios and Photios that forms the framework of this *vita*. But while the attributes ascribed to the two men should be seen more as the products of rhetorical necessity than reflections of objective reality, they are nonetheless very useful in revealing the issues and tensions that were perceived to be at the forefront of contemporary concern. These went far beyond the dynastic conflict between Amorian and Macedonian or even the generational conflict within those dynasties. Indeed, the topics addressed involve personal identity at its most basic level, beginning with gender and sexuality and including personal piety and religious experience. Yet taking precedence over both sex and religion was the issue of education or *paideia*: what set Photios apart from Ignatios and from humanity generally was his mastery of *he kosmike sophia*,<sup>7</sup> that is, worldly wisdom, which now included training in rhetoric as well as the standbys of classical culture such as Homer and Plato.

The Byzantines understood very clearly, as did Plato, the social and political ramifications of education. Rhetoric flourished in fifth-century Athens because of the revolutionary idea that all citizens, regardless of their background or bank account, had the potential to contribute to the

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<sup>6</sup> PG 105: 488B–573D; see also the discussion in M. Vinson, 'Gender and politics in the post-iconoclastic period: the *Lives* of Antony the Younger, the Empress Theodora, and the Patriarch Ignatios', *Byzantion* 68 (1998), 470–72.

<sup>7</sup> PG 105: 509C.

governance of the state.<sup>8</sup> By giving non-elite members of society the skills to formulate and articulate their own point of view, be it in the assembly or a court of law, rhetoric became a powerful tool for dismantling the social and economic barriers that had previously excluded such persons from public life. It is therefore ironic that what had begun as a mechanism for inclusion now became a means of exclusion. Such, at least, was the experience of Ignatios, who was castrated upon the deposition of his father Michael I in 813 and then consigned to a monastery, where a steady diet of bible study and religious tracts crippled him socially and politically as well as intellectually. This belt and braces approach to neutralizing a potential threat to the throne ensured that when Ignatios had lived long enough to be useful to another dynasty and was appointed patriarch by the empress Theodora in 847, he was utterly incapable of functioning effectively outside a monastic environment.

In deposing Photios shortly after his accession in 886 rather than letting him die in office as had been the case with Ignatios, Leo VI marks himself as a man in a hurry to put his own stamp on history. On one level, the deposition can be seen as Leo's rejection both of his father and his father's policies: the tit-for-tat politics afflicting church and state, the divisions between the educational haves and have-nots, lay and monk, male and differently gendered. Yet Leo's rejection of the past was not absolute. In fact, one can discern from the very beginning of his reign an attempt to reconcile the social divisions which had their roots in the iconoclastic era and had more recently crystalized around the figures of Photios and Ignatios.

This attempt, however, was beset with obstacles. Perhaps the greatest difficulty was Basil himself, who was stained not just with the blood of his assassinated predecessor but with the taint of an obscure provincial origin as well. Leo's rocky relationship with his father represented another problem in a culture as patriarchal and hierarchical as Byzantium was. A final challenge was posed by the various factions of Byzantine society, which, if anything, had become more polarized and entrenched in their positions in the recent past.

Nowadays, if a politician wants to embark on an ambitious and possibly controversial policy, that is, one with the potential for alienating large segments of society, he or she enlists the aid of press agents and public relations consultants to formulate a marketing strategy and then proceeds to implement it by appearing on talk shows, planting news items in the media, and so forth. In Byzantium, on the other hand, one had recourse to the original spin doctors, the rhetoricians. Leo took advantage of this long tradition and set the rhetorical tone for his new regime from the very start with his *Funeral Oration* for his father. The rhetorical model that Leo used,

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<sup>8</sup> Thuc. 2.37.

Menander Rhetor, is a very interesting choice and one that had far-reaching consequences, to judge from the number of late ninth- and tenth-century authors who followed his lead in using this textbook on epideictic oratory.

Although it is not hard to see why there was a rhetorical revival in the early years of the Macedonian dynasty, the choice of Menander Rhetor as the *de facto* court rhetorician is less easy to discern. There was certainly no dearth of literary or rhetorical theorists in antiquity or Byzantium. Indeed, even the most basic concepts, such as the *kolon* or clause, can be quite daunting to the beginner because there are as many definitions as there are theorists — for example, in the anonymous treatise, *On Figures*, attributed to the Patriarch Tarasios which, incidentally, elsewhere includes a couple of references to Gregory of Nazianzos.<sup>9</sup> Practically speaking, however, it does not really matter if a *kolon* has two words or twenty; such knowledge is not readily converted into effective and persuasive communication. Far more accessible to students of varying ability and experience were the *progymnasmata*, or preliminary exercises in composition, that formed the basis of rhetorical handbooks by such authors as Aphthonios and Menander Rhetor. These treatises from late antiquity were popular and effective for the same reasons: they are extremely user-friendly because of their practical approach, emphasis on process, and liberal use of examples, including sample speeches. Although both Menander and Aphthonios offer instruction at a very basic level, Menander Rhetor offers real solutions to real problems and it is this, in my view, that gives him the edge over Aphthonios, for example, who devised exercises on such topics as *mythos*, in which the student was asked to write 'a simple fable in imitation of Aesop'.<sup>10</sup> Menander, on the other hand, uses as his organizational scheme actual situations or occasions on which public speaking would be required.<sup>11</sup> If, for example, you are called upon to deliver a eulogy or the welcoming remarks for a visiting dignitary, Menander will walk you through the process step by step. He provides additional assistance in the

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<sup>9</sup> See Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3, 113.10–15, 113.20, 134.28 and the discussion in S. Efthymiadis, *The Life of the Patriarch Tarasios by Ignatios the Deacon (BHG 1698): introduction, text, translation and commentary* (Aldershot, 1998), 32–3.

<sup>10</sup> G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under the Christian Emperors* (Princeton, 1983), 60–61.

<sup>11</sup> *HPL*, vol. 1, 88–9, enumerates the various types of occasions for which Menander provides rhetorical guidelines; D. Russell, 'The panegyrists and their teachers', in M. Whitby, ed., *The Propaganda of Power: the role of panegyric in late antiquity* (Leiden, 1998), 28, emphasizes Menander's practicality in the late antique period. M.P. Vinson, ed. and tr., *The Correspondence of Leo Metropolitan of Synada and Syncellus* (Washington, D.C., 1985), Ep. 17.12–14 to Arsenios of Heraclea, offers an interesting perspective on these occasions: 'Well suited to you are the welcoming ceremonies (*ta epibateria*) of Heraclea, the pompous pretense, the empty rhetoric, the flowing beard, the arm wrestling, the yawning, the idiotic behavior, the trembling of limbs, the faltering steps, and the signs of mental derangement'.

form of concrete, specific suggestions such as advising his reader to compare the deceased to Theseus or Herakles.<sup>12</sup>

This advice, which, incidentally, Leo VI incorporated into his father's eulogy, illustrates very clearly how closely the concept of *paideia* had become intertwined with rhetorical practice. But where once this sort of 'worldly wisdom' had served to drive a wedge between the secular and religious communities, it now became, thanks to the agency of Menander, a source of unity and inclusion. In providing access to the corridors of power through education, Menander performs a function very much like that of the original sophists, who similarly equipped non-elite males with the tools for advancement. The levelling process manifests itself in a variety of ways including the phenomenon of the secular saint, such as the Empress Theodora and Antony the Younger, whose lives and *Lives* represent an attempt to reconcile the extremes embodied by Ignatios and Photios.<sup>13</sup>

The desire to strike a balance between secular and religious life helps to explain the popularity of Gregory of Nazianzos, who, like Menander Rhetor, was also the object of renewed interest in the late ninth century.<sup>14</sup> Gregory provides an example of how one might successfully negotiate an accommodation between the secular and religious realms. Although Gregory describes in eloquent and moving terms his preference for the philosophical, that is, monastic life, in the end his sense of duty prompts him to devote himself to action as well as contemplation and he returned to the world with a renewed commitment to fulfil his mission as a pastor and bishop.<sup>15</sup> In the struggle against Arianism, he fought valiantly on behalf of his flock and faith. Yet, just as the issues of learning and the learned became important factors during the iconoclastic controversy, so too in the contest between Arian and Nicaean orthodoxy *paideia* also became a bone of contention. In his book, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning*, Fred Norris has analysed Gregory's use of the Aristotelian concept of the *enthymeme* in his theological orations and has further shown how this form of argumentation advances the cause of orthodoxy by demonstrating his magisterial command of the classical tradition.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Menander Rhetor 421.9–10 (ed. Spengel). See also n. 20 below.

<sup>13</sup> Vinson, 'Gender and politics', 469–515.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, L. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium: image as exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, 1999). Interestingly, the author of the *Life of Ignatios* also wrote an encomium of Gregory: J.J. Rizzo, ed. and tr., *The Encomium of Gregory Nazianzen by Nicetas the Paphlagonian* (Brussels, 1976) especially chap. 5.39–45 on Gregory's equal mastery of pagan and Christian philosophy and pursuit of both active and contemplative virtue; cf. Vinson, 'Gender and politics', 512–13.

<sup>15</sup> See especially Or. 26 (PG 35: 1228A–1252C).

<sup>16</sup> F.W. Norris, *Faith Gives Fullness to Reasoning: the five theological orations of Gregory Nazianzen*. Introduction and commentary by F.W. Norris, translation by L. Wickham and F. Williams (Leiden, 1991), especially 17–39.

Yet even more interesting is that while Gregory was engaging in high-powered intellectual battle with formidable foes, he never lost sight of the fact that rhetoric is first and foremost the art of communication and his sermons remain intelligible to a diverse audience that included men and women of all ages and stations.<sup>17</sup> Homily 36, written at a very low moment in his tenure as bishop of Constantinople, provides a good example.<sup>18</sup> In this sermon, Gregory compares himself to Socrates, not explicitly but through a series of allusions to Plato's early or Socratic dialogues. As was the case with his use of enthymematic argumentation in the *Five Theological Orations*, so here too his command of the Platonic corpus establishes his membership in the intellectual elite. Gregory, however, was no elitist. So far from using his erudition to divide and exclude, he goes to extraordinary lengths to make his meaning as accessible as possible. For example, the very first paragraph of the homily begins with an allusion to the opening lines of the *Apology*, which must have been as familiar to Gregory's audience as Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* is to Americans.<sup>19</sup> This is immediately followed by a reference to the *Ion* and two more to the *Apology*. The sheer number of these allusions in a relatively short space as well as the emphasis on such basic concepts as Socratic ignorance and the image of the magnet and iron rings of poetic inspiration maximize the audience's opportunity to pick up on Gregory's subtext. Even more importantly, Gregory has integrated these allusions into his sermon so seamlessly that it remains accessible even to those who are unable to recognize or appreciate the Socratic imagery. For example, he blurs the lines between secular and religious literature by his reference to *Apology* 41e, where Socrates exhorts the jurors to reprimand his children if they show signs of thinking they are something when they are nothing, a sentiment echoed in Galatians 6.3.

That the resurgence of interest in Gregory of Nazianzos was very closely connected with that of Menander Rhetor is shown nowhere more clearly than in the fact that until very recently it was believed that Leo VI relied primarily on Gregory's funeral orations for Caesarius and Basil in composing the eulogy for his father, whereas in fact his comparison of Basil I to Herakles indicates that he drew directly on Menander's model for an

<sup>17</sup> See for example *Or.* 24.18: 'present the gifts ... that are appropriate for those who would truly honor him ... young women, the rejection of sensuality; matrons, the beauty of virtue rather than of body; young men, a manly suppressing of the passions; old men, sound judgement; civil authorities, sound government; military authorities, kindness; men of letters, reason and eloquence; priests ... the conscientious performance of your sacred duties; laity, ready obedience'. Cf. also *Orr.* 15.12 (*PG* 35: 932C-D), 19.6 and 9 (*PG* 35: 1049B, 1053A-B), 32.33 (*PG* 36: 212C), 44.8 (*PG* 36: 616B).

<sup>18</sup> See further M. Vinson, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Homily 36: a Socratic response to Christian persecution', *CM* 44 (1993), 255-66.

<sup>19</sup> *Or.* 36.1; Plato, *Apology* 17a.



*epitaphios logos*.<sup>20</sup> Menander's importance in the middle Byzantine period has been difficult to track for a number of reasons. To begin with, until my discovery that the *Life of Theodora* and other *vitae* such as the *Life of Theophano* were composed in accordance with Menander's guidelines for a *basilikos logos*,<sup>21</sup> it was generally thought that this genre had fallen into disuse for an extended period of time beginning well before the Dark Ages and continuing long afterward. For example, a recent study asserts that, with a single exception, 'there exist no *basilikoi logoi* in the proper sense of the term' between the fifth century and the 'revival of this genre in the mid-eleventh century'.<sup>22</sup> Other difficulties arise not from the question of whether Menander's treatise was used, but rather how it was used. For example, deviations from Menander's prescribed schema for an imperial oration, as in the *Life of Basil* attributed to Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, have led scholars to posit alternate models for this genre or to deny the direct influence of Menander altogether.<sup>23</sup> Conversely, there has been a tendency on the part of some modern scholars to lump all forms of encomium together, with the result that Menander's prescription for a *basilikos logos* is seen as being completely interchangeable with the generic encomium described by Aphthonios, although these are actually two distinct literary forms.<sup>24</sup> Again, the application of Menander's models in unexpected ways, as in adapting the format of an imperial oration to praise an empress rather than an emperor,<sup>25</sup> has also made it difficult to recognize the full extent of his impact on Byzantine literature in the late ninth century and beyond.

<sup>20</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 137, citing N. Adontz, 'La portée historique de l'oraison funèbre de Basile I par son fils Léon VI le Sage', *Byzantion* 8 (1933), 501–13. See now M. Vinson, 'The *Life of Theodora* and the rhetoric of the Byzantine bride show', *JÖB* 49 (1999), 52, n. 63.

<sup>21</sup> First published as, 'The Empress Theodora and the cult of domesticity in Byzantine hagiography', *Twenty-Second Annual Byzantine Studies Conference. Abstracts of Papers. October 24–27, 1996, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 70.

<sup>22</sup> See N. Radošević, 'The emperor as patron of learning in Byzantine *basilikoi logoi*', in J.S. Langdon et al., eds., *To Hellenikon: studies in honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, vol. 1 (New York, 1993), 267–87. The exception was written for Anastasios I by Prokopios of Gaza although there were also 'some *epitrapezioi logoi* delivered in the presence of Leo VI by the erudite writer and famous bibliophile Arethas of Caesarea and the short eulogy to military-minded young Basil II composed by Leo the Deacon' (p. 281). See also her list of *basilikoi logoi* on pp. 285–7 as well as my additions in 'Gender and politics', 513, n. 121.

<sup>23</sup> P.J. Alexander, 'Secular biography at Byzantium', *Speculum* 15 (1940), 199; R.J.H. Jenkins, 'The classical background of the *Scriptores Post Theophanem*', *DOP* 8 (1954), 22.

<sup>24</sup> The source of this confusion seems to be L.B. Struthers, 'The rhetorical structure of the encomia of Claudius Claudian', *HSCP* 30 (1919), 49–87, who conflates the encomia of Aphthonios and Menander Rhetor. This error was repeated by Harry L. Levy, 'Claudian's *In Rufinum* and the rhetorical ψόγος', *TAPA* 77 (1946), 57–65. More recent examples shall remain nameless.

<sup>25</sup> Radošević, 'Emperor as patron', 279 observes that 'Only a few *basilikoi logoi* were devoted to empresses'.

But while Gregory of Nazianzos certainly played his part in contributing to Menander's undeserved obscurity, the relationship between the two was not an entirely negative one, for the rhetorical strategies employed in Homily 36 and the *Five Theological Orations* can shed valuable light on the use of Menander's treatise on epideictic oratory. These strategies operate on two levels, the external and internal, to communicate meaning. On the external level, the rhetorical form in and of itself can be meaningful in the same way that Gregory of Nazianzos' use of enthymematic argumentation had a significance independent of the argument's actual content. The internal approach, on the other hand, involves the alteration or adaptation of rhetorical convention within the prescribed format, in the same way that Socratic allusions and imagery are deeply embedded in Homily 36.

Two works from the late ninth century provide a particularly good illustration of the use of external strategy, Leo VI's *Funeral Oration* for his father, and the *Life with Encomium of the Blessed and Holy Empress Theodora*,<sup>26</sup> which employ Menander Rhetor's guidelines for an *epitaphios logos* and *basilikos logos* respectively. As imperial propaganda, both of these works attempt to advance the cause of the Macedonian dynasty by adopting a conciliatory attitude towards the past, and in each case the rhetorical form makes a significant contribution to this end. The sympathetic treatment of Michael III in the *Funeral Oration* complements the public gesture that Leo VI made when he honoured the last Amorion with a state funeral and interment in the Church of the Holy Apostles along with his father, Basil I.<sup>27</sup> Yet at the same time the *Funeral Oration* also stands as an expression of filial piety towards a man with whom his son had had well-publicized differences.<sup>28</sup> The *Funeral Oration* thus represents an effort on the part of Leo VI to make personal and dynastic peace with the past. Although until very recently there has been some confusion about the rhetorical model for Basil's eulogy, the reference to Herakles shows quite clearly that Leo VI used Menander Rhetor rather than, or perhaps more accurately, in addition to, Gregory of Nazianzos. Certainly, Leo's use of Menander performs a function analogous to that of the illuminated edition of Nazianzos' homilies, which Photios commissioned for presentation to Basil I around 880. Leslie Brubaker has shown how the images which accompany the text are designed to address the question of Basil's status as a provincial

<sup>26</sup> A. Vogt and I. Hausherr, *Oraison funèbre de Basile I par son fils Léon le sage* (Rome, 1932); A. Markopoulos, 'Βίος τῆς αὐτοκρατείας Θεοδώρας (BHG 1731)', *Symmeikta* 5 (1983), 249–85.

<sup>27</sup> P. Grierson, 'The tombs and the obits of the Byzantine emperors (337–1042)', *DOP* 16 (1962), 57.

<sup>28</sup> See below n. 39. Cf. *ODB* 3: 1839, s.v. Theodore Santabarenos, a supporter of Photios, who engineered the rupture between father and son. Although Leo had Theodore blinded and exiled, in the end they were reconciled, with Theodore being recalled and given a pension from the Nea Ekklesia.

outsider.<sup>29</sup> Like the visual panegyrics of Paris. Gr. 510, Leo's use of Menander's schema for an *epitaphios logos* is similarly intended to legitimize the new regime by counteracting the perception that the early Macedonian emperors were uncultured savages from the empire's hinterlands. In other words, the rhetorical form makes a significant contribution to Leo's attempt to portray himself as a civilized human being in the fullest sense of the expression.<sup>30</sup>

Like the *Funeral Oration*, the *Life with Encomium of the Blessed and Holy Empress Theodora* also originated in the Macedonian court and was similarly designed to enhance the stature of the new regime, in this case by promoting, or rather establishing, the cult of St Theodora, the widow of the last iconoclastic emperor, Theophilos, who presided over the restoration of Orthodoxy in 843 as regent for her young son Michael III. The author's decision to cast his encomium of the empress in the form of an imperial oration was an inspired one and in many respects this *vita* is a masterpiece of rhetorical problem-solving.<sup>31</sup> As an external strategy, the choice of rhetorical form accomplishes several important goals. First of all, it establishes the cultural literacy of the Macedonian dynasty, which, as we have seen, was a consideration in the *Funeral Oration* as well. Secondly, the use of a secular genre for religious biography blurs the distinction between sacred and profane literature in much the same way as Gregory of Nazianzos' Homily 36, thus making a powerful statement that hagiography is no longer excluded from the concept of *paideia* or worldly wisdom. Thirdly, by according Theodora the rhetorical treatment normally reserved for male emperors, the encomiast leaves no doubt that she is a legitimate ruler in her own right.

On an external level, then, the mere decision to use a particular rhetorical form can convey valuable information that is completely independent of the actual content. Complementing this approach, careful analysis of a work's internal structure or organization can also yield useful results. For example, I have elsewhere shown how the author of the *Life of Theodora* has manipulated the prescribed format of an imperial oration in order to address the issue of Theodora's obscure provincial origin by substituting an elaborate account of the empress' marriage for the fictionalized treatment of a monarch's birth recommended by Menander.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, chs. 4 and 5, pp. 147–238.

<sup>30</sup> If one were to attempt to identify the factors which influenced the young emperor at the beginning of his reign, chief among them, I think, would have to be Photios, who owed his initial appointment to Michael III and appears to have used Menander himself in composing the letter of consolation written in 871 to his brother Tarasios on the death of his daughter. See D.S. White, *Patriarch Photios of Constantinople: his life, scholarly contributions, and correspondence together with a translation of fifty-two of his letters* (Brookline, Mass., 1981) 111–12.

<sup>31</sup> See further, Vinson, 'Gender and politics', 491–501.

<sup>32</sup> Vinson, 'Rhetoric of the Byzantine bride show', 34–8.

The encomiast further confirms the validity of Theodora's marriage in the face of her husband's heresy by placing the account of the bride show before Theophilos' accession, thus distancing his selection of a wife from the disastrous decisions he made as emperor, including the revival of iconoclasm. In the next century, Symeon the Logothete achieves the exact opposite effect by positioning his account of the bride show at the very beginning of Theophilos' reign, where his bungling of this, his first official act as sole emperor, serves as an evil omen of worse yet to come.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to guiding us to a correct interpretation of a text's often hidden meaning, analysis of a work's internal structure can also help to establish the chronological relationship between sources. For example, the *Life of Theodora* reports that shortly after the death of Theophilos the Arab Apodinar attacked Constantinople with a fleet of four hundred ships, only seven of which safely returned to Syria.<sup>34</sup> The fact that this incident is recorded by no other Greek or Arab source except the *Chronicle* of George the Monk has led scholars to question both its historicity and the relationship between the *Life of Theodora* and the *Chronicle*. To date, however, rhetorical analysis has not figured in discussions of these problems.<sup>35</sup> This is unfortunate because an understanding of Menander's guidelines can help to assess the relative value of these sources.

In the *Life of Theodora*, the account of the unsuccessful Arab naval expedition appears in the part of the speech devoted to 'actions'.<sup>36</sup> In a standard encomium of the sort described by Aphthonios, this topic is subdivided into the categories of soul, body, and fortune. In an imperial oration, on the other hand, the corresponding categories are war and peace because these are the things that emperors do that ordinary people do not do.<sup>37</sup> In the *Life of Theodora*, the section on actions opens with the accession of Theophilos, who promptly revives the iconoclastic heresy by declaring war on the iconophile faithful. Peace is restored at home and abroad with the accession of Michael III, under whose aegis orthodoxy is restored and the invasion of the godless Hagarenes is repulsed. If the account of the naval expedition is a fabrication, it is more likely that it was fabricated for the *Life of Theodora* than for the *Chronicle* of George the Monk, because in

<sup>33</sup> See Vinson, 'Rhetoric of the Byzantine bride show', 40–41 and 38, n. 23. Here again, the discrepancy creates a serious chronological problem with E.W. Brooks, 'The marriage of the Emperor Theophilos', *BZ* 10 (1901), 540–45 and more recently C. Ludwig, *Sonderformen byzantinischer Hagiographie und ihr literarisches Vorbild* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), 142, dating the marriage to 821/22 while W.T. Treadgold, 'The problem of the marriage of the Emperor Theophilos', *GRBS* 16 (1975), 325–41, following the Logothete, places it in 830.

<sup>34</sup> Vinson, 'St. Theodora', 373–4 and n. 73.

<sup>35</sup> E.g., D. Afinogenov, 'The date of *Georgios Monachos* reconsidered', *BZ* 92 (1999), 437–47.

<sup>36</sup> Vinson, 'St. Theodora', 357, 367–8; Markopoulos, 'Bioç', 260–68.

<sup>37</sup> Menander Rhetor 372.25–376.23 (ed. Spengel); cf. Aphthonios 36.12–16 (ed. Spengel). See also Vinson, 'Rhetoric of the Byzantine bride show', 41, n. 32.

the former it serves the particular rhetorical purpose of demonstrating the superior leadership of a god-fearing emperor, while in the latter it is simply another random item in a list. Yet even if this event did actually take place, the author of the *Life of Theodora* had a good rhetorical reason for singling out this incident for inclusion in his *vita* while George the Monk had no such motive. In either case, the abortive invasion suits the rhetorical context of the *vita* perfectly and for this reason it is more likely that the *Life of Theodora* served as the source for George's *Chronicle* rather than vice versa.

The *Chronicles* of Symeon the Logothete and George the Monk are by no means the only works to reveal the influence of the *Life of Theodora*. Three other saints' lives, all of women, are deeply dependent on this *vita* for both form and content. In each case, the genre of the imperial oration serves to ennoble the subject of the encomium, beginning with Theophano, the first wife of Leo VI, and continuing with Mary the Younger and Irene of Chrysobalanton. The factor that made it possible to identify the rhetorical form of these apparently unrelated works was the treatment of the topic actions under the headings of war and peace, which, as noted above, is the distinctive feature of an imperial oration. This portion of the encomium posed a particular difficulty to the hagiographer first of all because women, or at least the kind who are subjects of encomia, do not normally engage in warfare, and secondly because saints, although they regularly do battle with the devil and his minions, never come to terms with the forces of darkness.

The creativity that the authors of these *vitae* display in adapting the format of an imperial oration to a subject that is both female and saintly gives the lie to the view that Byzantine literature is derivative and wholly lacking in imagination. Indeed, it is interesting to note that in only one of the four *vitae*, namely the *Life of St Mary the Younger*, do we find a war in the traditional sense of the word, that is, a foreign invasion by enemies who are pacified by a strategic marital alliance.<sup>38</sup> In the *Life of Theophano*, on the other hand, the war takes the form of a family conflict between Theophano's husband, Leo VI, and his father Basil I, who reconcile as a result of a prophetic dream featuring a 'man of peace'.<sup>39</sup> As noted above, in the *Life of Theodora*, this topic takes the form of a holy war which breaks out when Theophilos attacks the iconophile faithful with his revival of iconoclasm and comes to an end when Theodora and Michael III make

<sup>38</sup> AASS Nov. 4, 700D-702C. The granddaughter of Romanos I Lekapenos (920-44), Maria, married Peter the Bulgarian in 927, thus ending the war begun by his father Symeon. See also A.E. Laiou, 'Life of St. Mary the Younger', in A.-M. Talbot, ed., *Holy Women of Byzantium: ten saints' lives in English translation* (Washington, D.C., 1996), 276-80.

<sup>39</sup> E. Kurtz, 'Zwei griechische Texte über die hl. Theophano, die Gemahlin Kaisers Leo VI', *Mémoires de l'académie des sciences de St.-Petersbourg*, 8th Series, Cl. hist.-philol., vol. 3.2 (1898), 7.11-14.14.

peace with the restoration of orthodoxy. The sheer length of this portion of the *vita* — it occupies seven of the twelve chapters in Markopoulos' edition<sup>40</sup> — as well as the emphatic use of martial language, in which the ranks of the faithful are marshalled and deployed against the phalanx of heretics, function in a way similar to the use of Socratic imagery at the beginning of Gregory of Nazianzos' Homily 36 to facilitate recognition of the rhetorical form, while at the same time providing a stirring account of religious persecution to the less educated members of the audience. One would have to include in this category the author of the *Life of Irene of Chrysobalanton*, who, though apparently oblivious to the rhetorical model for the *Life of Theodora*, nonetheless recognized that his account of the bride show should be followed by a war of some kind, which is here represented by the saint's spiritual battle with the devil which comes to a peaceful conclusion when she is chosen abbess of her convent.<sup>41</sup>

Rhetorical analysis can thus open a window onto the relationship between literary sources and the creative process in Byzantium. Yet it can also shed light on questions of social and political history. For example, of the four saints' lives that make use of Menander's format for an imperial oration, three (Theodora, Theophano, Irene) contain bride shows and three (Theodora, Theophano, Mary) have as their subjects married women. Both of these phenomena, the Byzantine bride show and the married saint, have generated much scholarly interest and debate but progress has been impeded by the failure of scholars to consider the rhetorical aspects of the sources. When this factor is taken into account, it emerges that the *Life of Theodora* is not a 'rather late' and therefore irrelevant document as some have maintained,<sup>42</sup> but rather the source from which the other three *vitae* in this group derived both their form and content. Once the formal, chronological, and thematic relationship between these texts is established, it then becomes possible to see that the use of Menander's treatise for hagiographical works is part of a larger process of secularization which included the phenomenon of the married saint and had its origins in the imperial propaganda of the early Macedonian court.<sup>43</sup>

The late ninth century saw a renewed interest in the rhetorical forms and conventions of Greco-Roman antiquity. Two rhetoricians from the late antique period, Menander Rhetor and Gregory of Nazianzos, were key figures in this revival.<sup>44</sup> Although they differed in important respects such

<sup>40</sup> Chaps. 5–8 (War); chaps. 9–12.18 (Peace).

<sup>41</sup> J.O. Rosenqvist, *The Life of St. Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton: a critical edition with introduction, translation, notes and indices* (Uppsala, 1986), 18–29, chaps. 6–7.

<sup>42</sup> E.g. D. Afinogenov, 'The bride-show of Theophilos: some notes on the sources', *Eranos* 95 (1997), 17.

<sup>43</sup> 'Gender and politics', 513–15.

<sup>44</sup> The revival of late antique art forms appears to have included architecture as well as literature; see C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1978), 109 on the Kainourgion or

as religion, both alike were united in their belief that rhetoric was a form of communication that was, or at least ought to be, accessible to the many, not the few. It was this accessibility that accounts for their popularity in the late ninth century and allowed them to play a mediating and indeed conciliating role in the post-iconoclastic period and beyond. Analysis of the rhetorical forms and strategies associated with these two writers can deepen our understanding of Byzantine literature and the creative process, establish relationships between apparently unrelated texts, and uncover meaning independent of a text's actual content. Rhetorical analysis, however, has its limitations as do all critical approaches. Knowing why the author of the *Life of Theodora* has Michael III visit his mother's deathbed cannot tell us whether he actually did so. But while failure to consider the rhetorical aspects of our sources can lead to misunderstanding and error, the main reason that the study of Byzantine rhetoric should be important to us is that it was important to the Byzantines themselves.

## 2. The rhetoric of Kekaumenos<sup>1</sup>

Charlotte Roueché

### *The composition*

Since their first appearance the *Consilia et Narrationes* ascribed to Kekaumenos have been warmly received, not least because of the simple directness of their style. The simplicity of the composition has sometimes been considered the simplicity of the author: 'volksmassige Naivität' (Krumbacher);<sup>2</sup> 'sa simplicité, son naturel, son ingénuité' (Lemerle);<sup>3</sup> 'practically unencumbered by the burden of the classical literary tradition' (Ševčenko).<sup>4</sup> The style of the *Consilia* is undoubtedly sharp and refreshing, in contrast to that of more elaborated works of the same period; but this contrast should not be allowed to obscure the skill or the subtlety of our author. As one scholar has observed, 'it is dangerous to underestimate the rhetoricity of Kekaumenos'.<sup>5</sup>

The text survives in one manuscript, and its opening part — of an unknown length — is lost; we do not therefore have its title, but that of *Strategikon*, used by the first editor, has been replaced in most modern editions and discussions by *Consilia et Narrationes*, Advice and Anecdotes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I have discussed these issues with many friends and colleagues, and benefited greatly; but my greatest gratitude is due, for this and so much else, to Robert Browning, who commented on this paper a few weeks before his death, and whose insights were fundamental to my thinking.

<sup>2</sup> GBL, 269.

<sup>3</sup> P. Lemerle, *Prolégomènes à une édition critique et commentée des Conseils et Récits de Kékaumenos* (Brussels, 1960), 95.

<sup>4</sup> I. Ševčenko, 'Constantinople viewed from the eastern provinces in the middle Byzantine period', in I. Ševčenko and F.E. Sysyn, eds., *Eucharisterion: essays presented to Omeljan Pritsak* (Harvard, 1979–80), 712–47 (reprinted in *idem, Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World* [Aldershot, 1982], VI), at 727.

<sup>5</sup> M. Mullett, 'Byzantium: a friendly society?', *Past and Present* 118 (1988), 10, n. 38.

<sup>6</sup> This was the description used by the discoverer of the text, V. Vasiljevskij, 'Sovety i rasskazy vizantijskoo bojarina Xlv', *Min. Nar. Pros.* 215 (1881), 242–99 and 216 (1881), 102–71, 316–57; but the full text was published as *Cecaumeni Strategicon*, ed. B. Wassiliewsky and P. Jernstedt (St Petersburg, 1896). In discussion I use the pagination of that text, which is still the most widely available. Understanding of the text was enormously enhanced by the work of P. Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*. The most recent full edition is by G.G. Litavrin, *Cecaumeni Consilia et Narrationes* (Moscow, 1972; a re-edition is in preparation), used as a basis for the edition with



The author's name is deduced to be Kekaumenos, and he appears to have been writing in the 1070s. The work takes the form of a series of admonitions, illuminated by stories, mostly drawn from the author's own experience. The author's son or sons are the addressees: 'child' at 46.10, 54.6, 'my child' at 45.28 and 66.12, 'my children' at 59.22 and more fully at 74.1 'my beloved children, whom God has given me', elaborated at 76.3: 'I have not compiled this as a piece of poetry, for other people, but for you and your brothers, my children, those from my loins, whom God has given me'. This additional mention of brothers makes it seem quite possible that these were real people.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the recipient of the work is addressed in personal and affectionate terms at 19.23–5. But the composition of an admonitory work addressed to a real person, but intended for a wider audience, was a well-established tradition, which, in Greek literature, originates with the two texts ascribed to Isocrates, the *Ad Demonicum* and the *Ad Nicoclem*; in the latter the author simply offers his advice as a gift, but in the former he gives as one of his reasons for writing that he was a friend of the father of Demonikus. Thereafter the idea that education is one of the great gifts of a father to his son develops and flourishes.<sup>8</sup> The same framework is found in the Old Testament; the two most substantial works of advice there, the Proverbs and the Sophia Sirach (Ecclesiasticus, in the Apocrypha), are each addressed to the unnamed son of the writer, drawing on an ancient convention in Near-Eastern wisdom literature.

By the Byzantine period, therefore, the tradition of addressing advisory, 'parainetic' works to a child was well established; the author is often presented as the father (so Basil I, Constantine Porphyrogennetos, Alexios I, and the author of the *Spaneas*),<sup>9</sup> sometimes as the teacher of the addressee (so Nicholas Mystikos to Samuel, Photios to Boris).<sup>10</sup> The *Consilia et Narrationes*, therefore, is a work in an established and developing genre, with respected antecedents in both pagan and Jewish literature. Moreover, within that genre, advice to a young man and advice to an emperor were closely intertwined. The two Isocratic works are addressed to a young man (Demonikos) and a king (Nikokles) in very similar terms; it is noticeable that Photios drew extensively and without distinction on

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Modern Greek translation, by D. Tsougarakis, *Κεκαυμένος, Στρατηγικόν* (Athens, 1993) and by M. Spadaro, *Cecaumeno: raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo* (Alessandria, 1998).

<sup>7</sup> So Lemerle, *Prolégomènes*, 18–19.

<sup>8</sup> See R.A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language* (Berkeley, 1988), 66–8.

<sup>9</sup> Basil I: *Paraenetica ad Leonem*, PG 107, xxi–lix; Constantine VII: *De Administrando*, proem. and 1, 4–15; *De Exped.* (ed. J. Haldon, Vienna, 1990), C 8–19, with commentary there; Alexios: *Mousai*, ed. P. Maas, BZ 22 (1922), 348–62; *Spaneas*: ed. G. Danezis, *Spaneas: Vorlage, Quellen, Versionen* (Munich, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> See the examples listed by Danezis, *Spaneas*, 121–2.

both when composing his letter to Boris.<sup>11</sup> A young emperor requires advice even more than any other young man. It can be put in the mouth of his predecessor, as with two speeches attributed to Justin II and Tiberius, Basil I's advice to Leo, or Alexios I's advice to his son in the *Mousai*,<sup>12</sup> or it can be expressed by a tutor or a man of learning — as with Agapetos' *Advice to Justinian* or Theophylakt of Ochrid's *Advice to Constantine Doukas*.<sup>13</sup> The audience for all these works is larger than the person addressed. When set in the mouth of a predecessor, advice can advertise the legitimacy of the successor, inheritor of royal wisdom. In the mouth of a teacher, it can justify and exalt the functions of the ruler. The presentation of such advice, largely expressed in very general and ideal terms, can also be used to air specific and contemporary issues — as in Synesius' speech to Arcadius, or Kekaumenos' *Consilium Principi*. In fact, Kekaumenos handles very elegantly the combination of *parainesis* to a 'son' and to an emperor. The first paragraph of the *Consilium Principi* is still directed to the earlier addressee, advising him as to what he should do if he is given an unjust command by the emperor. He should disobey, because the emperor is bound by the laws of piety — and, since he is, it is appropriate to give him some advice (93.1–8). Nor is it outlandish to find advice on military matters intertwined with moral advice. The *Strategikon* of Maurice, assembled in the late sixth century, contains one section made up of *gnomai* (see further below).

### Structure

In both of his parainetic compositions, therefore, Kekaumenos can be seen to be operating within an established tradition. Moreover, the admonitory treatise which he has composed is carefully structured. It is broken into sections, each of which is preceded by a hypothesis as to the addressee's way of life: e.g. 'if you are a judge' (6.4) or 'if you are a general' (9.4) or 'if you are living at home' (36.10); within these sections are further subsections about different eventualities: e.g. 'if someone offers you gifts' (6.24), 'if your opponent sends envoys to you' (17.3) or 'if someone asks you to give him alms' (47.24). The admonitory poem *Spaneas* includes a few hypotheses about the addressee's occupation: 'if you hold office', 'if you go to war'; but the structure which Kekaumenos has elaborated is a good deal more complicated, and presupposes a fairly high level of

<sup>11</sup> *Epistula* 1, ed. B. Laourdas and L.G. Westerink, *Photius, Epistulae et Amphilochia* (Leipzig, 1983), 1–39; on this see most recently P. Odorico, 'La lettre de Photius à Boris de Bulgarie', *BSI* 54 (1993), 83–8.

<sup>12</sup> Justin II: Evagrius, *HE* V, 13, Theophylakt Simokatta, *Hist.* III.11, xi and John of Ephesos III.5; Tiberius: Theophylakt Simokatta, *Hist.* I, 1. For Basil and Alexios see n. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Agapetos: R. Riedinger, *Agapetos Diakonos, Der Fürstenspiegel für Kaiser Justinianos* (Athens, 1995); Theophylakt: *Opera*, ed. P. Gautier (Thessalonike, 1980), 183–5.

organization. In developing this structure, he may well have been influenced by the strategic authors, whom we know him to have read, who tended to use a similar series of hypotheses to organize their material.

Within this framework, he uses a consistent structure. As a general rule, having established a hypothesis, he begins with an *admonition*; in a majority of cases he continues with an *example*; and he includes, usually in conclusion, a *generalization*. The *admonitions* occur regularly: e.g. 'Avoid drinking parties' (4.27); 'Don't go out of the camp' (31.28); 'If you have a title, honour it' (42.10); 'Don't buy office with gifts' (59.10). Each of these shows, by its lack of a connective particle, that we are starting a new topic. The *examples* are found most abundantly in the strategic section (9–36), where it is often tempting to believe that the admonition has been included in order to introduce the example. In this section, the examples are almost all drawn from real events; in the other sections, some are drawn from real life, but more often they are imaginary, in some cases taking the form of long and vivid accounts, such as the description of the debtor's misfortunes (36.26–37.29), the borrower's ingenuity (48.6–49.14), the unhappy second marriage (56.4–28) or the fate of the toparch who gives up his land (76.25–77.13). This sort of excursus is also found in the Old Testament writers; in the *Spaneas* a parallel can be found in the story of Rehoboam.

Finally, many sections end with the *generalization*, normally linked to the rest of the section by γάρ, 'for': e.g. 'for I have seen many people run into danger over this' (4.12), a reference to personal experience which is itself a convention,<sup>14</sup> 'for if you overlook injustices, the Only Just will overlook you' (20.16); 'for you don't know what the evil men want' (100.12). These generalizations sometimes take the form of quotations: 'for the man did not lie, who said ...' (38.1), 'the angel said to Zosimas ...' (101.26); or *gnomai*: 'for everything is in (a state of) flow and ebb' (46.3). But, while many of Kekaumenos' gnomic phrases can be traced, some apparently similar ones cannot be. It may well be that, in many cases, they are still to be found; but some striking phrases are clearly Kekaumenos' own developments of existing gnomic themes or phrases: e.g. 'for the good is not good when it befriends evil' (44.29). Others appear to be wholly original, e.g.: 'Decay and stink are unpleasant, but unsuitable and undisciplined speech is more unpleasant' (61.11: these two lack the connective 'for'); 'for the lion begets a lion, and the fox a fox' (54.20); 'for a bait catches a fish, and the receipt of gifts and the gleam of gold does the same for most men' (23.17–18). If these expressions are Kekaumenos' own, they are not insignificant contributions to the gnomic tradition in

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Photios, *Ep.* 1, 1122: 'for I have seen, I have seen'; or *Nautica* (ed. A. Dain, *Naumachica* [Paris, 1943]), 9.10: 'for many, confident in their numbers, have been defeated by a smaller force'.

Byzantine literature. It is therefore of interest to note other contributions to the body of *gnomai*. In the same manuscript as our text, for example, there is a collection of sayings and *gnomai*, most of which are well known, but some of which appear to have no parallel.<sup>15</sup> It seems likely that the person who assembled those sayings also perhaps devised some of his own; it may be of significance that, of those without an exact parallel, no. 41 is very similar to a passage in the *Consilia*, 61.21–2, and no. 50 resembles 61.17–19. It remains a possibility that other material in the Moscow manuscript came from the desk, if not the pen, of Kekaumenos.

All this tends to suggest that we should attribute to Kekaumenos a considerable amount of deliberate literary activity. A further evidence of this lies in his elaboration of certain themes. Thus the idea of the general as the *τύπος καὶ ὑπόγραμμος* (model and example), which appears in the *Consilia* at 20.22f., is taken up and expanded in the *Consilium Principi* (99.29–32). The idea that you should resist a suggestion to drink poison (50.21) is used again at 93.3, but turned from indirect to direct speech, and combined with a further example of bad advice. The use of the fall of Michael V as an illustration of the instability of human affairs, first found at 59.7–8, is repeated at greater length at 100.13–16.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the passage about reading at 83.6–11 appears to conflate and develop themes found at 19.15–17 and at 47.14–22.<sup>17</sup> In this last case, it is not clear which passage should be seen as coming first. The other examples, however, make it appear highly likely that the *Consilium Principi* was written after the *Consilia*, and that Kekaumenos re-used, and embroidered (since the version in the *Consilium Principi* is, in each case, the more complex) ideas which he had first developed while writing the *Consilia*.

This is not the work of an ill-educated man. It is written in a *koine* Greek which is nearer to the Septuagint than to the Hellenistic tradition; but the language is used fully and correctly. It is Kekaumenos to whom Robert Browning first turned to support his argument that literacy might be more widespread in the Byzantine world than recent scholarship has suggested; in particular, it must have been a requirement for military officers and middle-ranking bureaucrats, and Browning set out a list of examples of such people who owned manuscripts.<sup>18</sup> It may therefore be of value in

<sup>15</sup> E. Papamichael, ed., *Die Apophthegmensammlung im Codex K Mosquensis 436* (S. Synod. 298) (Köln, 1981).

<sup>16</sup> This event seems rapidly to have become a literary *exemplum*; the rhetorician John Doxapatres (for whom see further below) includes, as an example of *ethopoia*, a lament by Michael V (Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 2, 508).

<sup>17</sup> On these passages see further C. Roueché, 'The literary background of Kekaumenos', in C. Holmes and J. Waring, eds., *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond* (Leiden, 2002), 111–38.

<sup>18</sup> 'Literacy in the Byzantine world', *BMGS* 4 (1978), 39–54 (reprinted in *idem*, *History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World* [Northampton, 1989], VII); and 'Further reflections

understanding a whole stratum of Byzantine society to establish the level of education which Kekaumenos might have received.

### *Education*

The Byzantine educational curriculum was that developed in the Graeco-Roman period. After the basic learning of reading and writing,<sup>19</sup> the first stage of secondary education was the study of language and style, by means of the analysis of texts with the grammaticus.<sup>20</sup> After this, a student might hope to go on to the study of rhetoric, and thereafter, in some cases, to philosophy. Access to education was dependent partly on geography; teachers practised in centres large enough to provide a reasonable flow of pupils; grammatici in various towns and cities, rhetors and philosophers in a smaller number of larger cities.<sup>21</sup> It was also, crucially, dependent on means; many students must have progressed in the educational curriculum only so far as their parents could afford.<sup>22</sup> It is because the bulk of the literature which survives from the antique and Byzantine period was written by people who had completed the full curriculum and mastered all the arts of rhetoric that we tend to overlook the substantial numbers of students who had begun with them but stopped their studies at some earlier point.<sup>23</sup> Despite the attitudes of such writers, a shortened education of this kind could still be useful — for example, for government service, which will probably have been the goal for many parents who paid for such education.<sup>24</sup>

In the Byzantine period the basic order of study remained the same; a *propaideia* in reading and writing,<sup>25</sup> then the study of the language, based on the analysis of texts (as with a grammaticus) and then the study of rhetoric.<sup>26</sup> Again, it is clear that there were fewer teachers at the higher

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on literacy in Byzantium' in J. Langdon *et al.*, eds., *To Hellenikon: studies in honor of S. Vryonis, Jr.* (New York, 1993), vol. 1, 69–84. Since the first article an important debate on literacy in the Roman world has been under way; see W. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Harvard, 1989), and the reply to it by Mary Beard and seven other scholars, *Literacy in the Roman world* (Ann Arbor, 1991).

<sup>19</sup> R. Kaster, 'Notes on "primary" and "secondary" schools in Late Antiquity', *TAPA* 113 (1983), 323–46.

<sup>20</sup> On these in Late Antiquity see now the very full study by Kaster, *Guardians*.

<sup>21</sup> For Late Antiquity see Kaster, *Guardians*, 20–22, 126–8.

<sup>22</sup> Kaster, *Guardians*, 25–7.

<sup>23</sup> See Kaster, *Guardians*, 26, drawing on evidence from the group which we know best, the students of Libanios, for whom see P. Petit, *Les étudiants de Libanios* (Paris, 1956).

<sup>24</sup> For the schooling of the grammarian as leading to government service see Kaster, 'Notes', 326.

<sup>25</sup> P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), 99–100.

<sup>26</sup> For Byzantium, see Lemerle, *Humanisme*, 100 ff; P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 196–7.

level — the most dramatic example of this being provided by the story of Leo the Mathematician's search for someone capable of teaching him rhetoric.<sup>27</sup> Despite the fact that Leo found such a teacher — according to tradition, on the island of Andros — in general the tendency for higher level teaching to be concentrated in the large cities continued.<sup>28</sup> We do have one source which offers us insight into the practice of education in the middle Byzantine period and that is the collection of letters written by a teacher who lived and worked in Constantinople in the tenth century.<sup>29</sup> Those reveal, most strikingly, that payment was still a very important issue, and strongly suggest that students would stop their studies at various points. They show one man in charge of teaching a wide age-range of pupils at various stages in a long curriculum. This included 'grammar' together with, apparently, rhetoric; but it is not clear in what this consisted.

In both the Roman and the Byzantine periods, therefore, money and geography will have meant that many more young men will have studied 'grammar' than those who entered the next stage of rhetorical learning. At least from Roman times the transition from 'grammar' to rhetoric was made by studying the *progymnasmata*, the 'preliminary exercises'.<sup>30</sup> Several rhetors, most importantly Theon<sup>31</sup> and Hermogenes,<sup>32</sup> wrote directions for *progymnasmata*, some with examples; the tradition was summarized and very clearly set out in the late fourth century by Nikolaos of Myra<sup>33</sup> and then Aphthonios, whose work became the basic text used in the Byzantine period.<sup>34</sup> Several commentaries on this exist, including one written in the ninth century by John of Sardis,<sup>35</sup> and another written in the eleventh century by John Doxapatres.<sup>36</sup>

As early as the first century AD, Quintilian discussed how the 'preliminary exercises', *primordia*, should be taught; he recommended that

<sup>27</sup> Theophanes Continuatus (ed. Bekker) 4.29, cited by Lemerle, *Humanisme*, 149.

<sup>28</sup> For provincial teachers in the Byzantine period, see Browning, 'Literacy', 46–8.

<sup>29</sup> On these see R. Browning, 'The correspondence of a tenth-century Byzantine scholar', *Byzantion* 24 (1954), 397–452, reprinted in *Studies on Byzantine History, Literature and Education* (London, 1977), IX; R. Browning and B. Laourdas, 'Τὸ κείμενον τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ κώδικος, BM 36749', *EEBS* 27 (1957), 151–212; Lemerle, *Humanisme*, chap. 9, especially 246–57; and most recently, A. Markopoulos, ed., *Anonymi Professoris Epistulae* (Berlin and New York, 2000).

<sup>30</sup> On the *progymnasmata* see G.A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, 1994), 202–8 (very general); R.F. Hock, 'General Introduction' in the very useful volume by R.F. Hock, and E.N. O'Neil, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric* (Atlanta, 1986), 3–60; and for Byzantium, Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 92–120.

<sup>31</sup> Aelius Theon, *Progymnasmata*, ed. M. Patillon (Paris, 1997).

<sup>32</sup> *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1913).

<sup>33</sup> *Nicolai Progymnasmata*, ed. I. Felten (Leipzig, 1913).

<sup>34</sup> *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1926).

<sup>35</sup> *Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1928).

<sup>36</sup> The introduction edited by H. Rabe, *Prolegomenon Sylloge* (Leipzig, 1931), no. 9, 80–155; the text in Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 2, 81–564.

at least the first four exercises should be taught by a *grammaticus*, rather than a rhetorician (*Inst. Orat.* 1.9.1) while recognizing that they were in practice frequently also taught by rhetors (2.4.1).<sup>37</sup> Suetonius suggested a similar arrangement, although his account is less specific,<sup>38</sup> and it may well be that this division of labour continued, at least in the Latin world; in the sixth century the grammarian Priscian wrote a set of *progymnasmata*.<sup>39</sup> By the time of Aphthonios, the order of the *progymnasmata* had been fixed. The first four exercises, were: the *mythos*, a myth of the Aesopic type, leading to a general moral point; the *diegema*, a straightforward narrative; the *chreia* and the *gnome*.<sup>40</sup> Both of the latter used sayings from the past. The *chreia* was an anecdote with a pithy saying from a famous person of the past;<sup>41</sup> the *gnome* was a generally applicable saying, quoted without reference to its author.

### *The progymnasmata and the florilegia*

Any student, therefore, who proceeded beyond the basic instruction of the *grammaticus* would first meet these four *progymnasmata*. That many did so is also indicated by the impact of these forms on Byzantine texts. The popularity of the *mythos* is clear from the abundant texts of myths attributed to Aesop,<sup>42</sup> as well as many by known authors.<sup>43</sup> In the eleventh century the tradition of the *mythos* was enormously enriched by the translations of two works of moralizing stories from the east: the story of Sinbad, *Syntipas*, translated by Michael Andreopoulos, and *Kallilah and*

<sup>37</sup> Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 1.9.1–2: Et finitae quidem sunt partes duae quas haec professio pollicetur, id est ratio loquendi et enarratio auctorum, quarum illam methodicen, hanc historicen uocant. Adiciamus tamen eorum curae quaedam dicendi primordia quibus aetatis nondum rhetorem capientis instituant ... 3–4: Sententiae quoque et chriae et aetiologiae subiectis dictorum rationibus apud grammaticos scribantur, quia initium ex lectione ducunt: quorum omnium similis est ratio, forma diuersa, quia sententia uniuersalis est uox, aetiologia personis continetur.

<sup>38</sup> Suetonius, *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* 4.7. See Patillon, *Aelius Théon*, ix–xiii.

<sup>39</sup> Priscian, *Praeexercitamina*, ed. H. Keil, *Grammatici Latini*, vol. 3 (Leipzig, 1859), 430–40.

<sup>40</sup> For Quintilian, the first four are *myth*, *gnome*, *chreia* and aetiology. Theon has the same headings as Aphthonios, but in a different order: *chreia* with *gnome*, *mythos*, *diegema*.

<sup>41</sup> On this see now Hock and O'Neil, *The Chreia*, presenting, translating and discussing all the evidence for the uses of the *chreia*. See also Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 98–100; C. Skidmore, *Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen: the work of Valerius Maximus* (Exeter, 1996), especially chap. 5.

<sup>42</sup> *Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*, ed. A. Hausrath and H. Hunger (Leipzig, 1959–).

<sup>43</sup> Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 94–6; for examples see J.-T. Papadimitriou, 'Some Aesopic fables in Byzantium and the Latin West,' *Illinois Classical Studies* 8 (1983), 122–36.

*Dimnah*, translated as *Stephanites and Ichnelates* by Symeon Seth.<sup>44</sup> Both these works are found in the same manuscript as the *Consilia et Narrationes*.

The importance of the *chreia* and the *gnome* are attested by the enormous numbers of *florilegia* and collections of both which survive. Some such collections can be seen as clearly intended to supply the writers of *gnomai* and *chreiai*.<sup>45</sup> Kekaumenos can be shown to have used at least one *florilegium*;<sup>46</sup> and he uses the material as he will have been taught to do. When he is urging generosity to the poor, he reinforces this with the observation that 'the rich man is a god for the poor man because of his generosity to him' (3.3). This is a direct echo of a common *gnome*, 'when you act charitably, think that you are imitating God', derived from a passage of Gregory of Nazianzos.<sup>47</sup> That *gnome* formed the subject of an exemplary *progymnasma* by Nikephoros Basilakes in the twelfth century.<sup>48</sup> Kekaumenos 'works it up', using further references to the work of Gregory, and also an elegant reference to his own knowledge of Bulgarian, just as his teacher might have required.

### *The rhetoric of Kekaumenos*

Recent work has shown how influential the *progymnasmata* were, and how helpful the study of examples of these exercises can be in assisting us to understand aspects of Byzantine literature.<sup>49</sup> It is, however, characteristic of our knowledge of Byzantine education that, while we have abundant theoretical texts on rhetoric, these are mostly awaiting scientific editions,<sup>50</sup> and also that for the most part such texts concentrate on giving us theoretical information, with very little indication of the practical realities. We are not in a position to say whether Byzantine students in the eleventh century studied the first *progymnasmata* with the equivalent of a *grammaticus* or a *rhetor*. But one thing which emerges clearly from the close

<sup>44</sup> V. Jernstedt and P. Nikitin, eds., *Michael Andreopoulos, Liber Syntipae*, Mémoires de l'Académie Imperiale des Sciences de St. Petersburg, Cl. hist.-philol., 11 (St Petersburg, 1912); L.-O. Sjöberg, ed., *Stephanites et Ichnelates* (Uppsala, 1962).

<sup>45</sup> So J.F. Kindstrand, 'A collection of apophthegmata in an Oxford manuscript', in S.-T. Teodorsson, ed., *Greek and Latin Studies in Memory of Cajus Fabricius* (Göteborg, 1990), 141-53, at 145.

<sup>46</sup> Roueché, 'Literary background'.

<sup>47</sup> Greg. Naz., *Hymn*, I, 30, 5, frequently cited in the *florilegia*; see E. Sargologos, *Un traité de vie spirituelle et morale du XIe siècle: le florilège sacro-profane du manuscrit 6 de Patmos* (Thessalonike, 1990), 2.45 and references there.

<sup>48</sup> Niceforo Basilace, *Progymnasmata e monodie*, ed. A. Pignani (Naples, 1983), *progymnasma* 24, 101-3. On Basilakes see most recently P. Magdalino, in L. Mayali and M. Mart, eds., *Of Strangers and Foreigners* (Berkeley 1993), 47-63.

<sup>49</sup> See R.M. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge, 1989), 20-5.

<sup>50</sup> See Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 75-91, especially 78.



reading of Kekaumenos is that he had clearly been schooled in at least those four.

It has to be admitted that there is no clear evidence in his text that he had practised writing the *mythos*, although it is of considerable interest that the manuscript in which his work is found contains large numbers of collections of *mythoi*, as well as the two eastern texts mentioned above. It can, however, be assumed that he had worked on the *mythos*, since he is so clearly trained in the subsequent exercises.

Kekaumenos has a standard form of introduction for his stories, starting very baldly from either the persons involved or the place: 'so and so is a city' is used to open stories of Thessalonike (22.9), Demetrias (28.9), Serbia (28.32), Otranto (30.3), Boianos (32.2), a city whose name is lost (32.28), Iadora and Salona (77.19); cf. also, for variants, the stories of Moreia (32.14), Antioch (33.18) and Demetrias (34.1). The person is made the starting point in the stories of Pediadites (20.26), Basil the *pronoetes* (24.4), Tribounios (25.24), Katakalon Klazomenites (27.10), Teras (35.1), the family of Nikoulitzas (65.10), Nikoulitzas (66.19), Apelzarach (78.8), Nikoulitzas the elder (96.12), Harald (97.2), Michael V (98.28), Augustus (100.26). In all these examples the person or the place opens the account, and appears in the nominative. This would seem to reflect what he had been taught. There were five modes of *diegema*, of which the first is *orthon dramatikon* ('declaratory, in the nominative'), exemplified by 'Medea was the daughter of Aetos' (Hermogenes 4.21–5.1). This is the mode recommended for historical narrative (Hermogenes 5.19–20); unfortunately, most of the rhetorical examples which we have are based on mythological stories, which required the 'dramatic' mode (*dramatikon*) (Hermogenes 4.17, Aphthonios 2, 20). The essential virtues of a *diegema* are clarity (*sapheneia*), brevity (*syntomia*) and credibility (*pithanotes*), with a fourth requirement being the use of Hellenized terms. The narratives of Kekaumenos are clearly directed by a consistent idea of style, and meet all these requirements, using the declaratory nominative mode.

Most strikingly, the form of the *chreia* and the *gnome* dominate his structure, as it has already been described. The *chreia* involved setting out a saying, and elaborating it:

The *chreia* is a concise saying or action, attributed appropriately to a specified person or equivalent ...

It is closely linked to the *gnome*, and the reminiscence (*apomnemoneuma*).

Similar [to the *chreia*] are *gnome* and reminiscence. For every concise *gnome*, if it is attributed to an individual, forms a *chreia*; and a reminiscence is an action or saying which is useful for living (*biopheles*) (Theon, 96, 19–24).

Students were expected to develop these citations in an exercise (*ergasia*). The procedures were, when relevant, an encomium of the speaker; a paraphrase; an explanation (*aitia*); an argument from the opposite (*ek tou enantiou*); a comparison (*parabole*); an example (*paradeigma*); supporting material from other authors; and an epilogue (Aphthonios 8, 3–6). Kekaumenos provides no encomia, since his *gnomai* are normally unattributed. He used the form of the explanation, and even more often the argument from the opposite (what will happen if you don't follow this advice) connected to the narrative by γάρ, which is common in the rhetorical examples;<sup>51</sup> he frequently uses the comparison or an example, and sometimes supports his argument with references to other authors. Thus, the advice to be thrifty (36.24–38.4) is supported by a long example 'from the opposite' (on the evils of borrowing) and rounded off with a series of citations (37.31–38.4). The advice to an emperor to avoid flatterers (100.24–101.28) is illustrated by two examples (100.25–101.21), then rephrased (101.21–3), with an explanation (23–6), and rounded off with a quotation (26–7).

This text shows how the forms set out in the *progymnasmata* could be developed to serve the purposes of an author. Kekaumenos uses the structural techniques taught in the first four exercises, and uses, throughout his work, a fund of quotations, most of them easily traced in the known *florilegia*. He also, as I have mentioned above, constructs his own aphorisms, as does at least one of the 'authors' of *Digenes Akritis*.<sup>52</sup> He uses the accepted structure and familiar thoughts of the *gnomai* for his own purposes.<sup>53</sup>

### *The education of Kekaumenos*

Having said all this, it is important not to claim too much for Kekaumenos' education. There is no evidence to suggest that he ever went beyond the *progymnasmata* in his education. It may be that the description of the Vlachs (74.4–75.12) is modelled on a *psogos* ('invective'; exercise number 7); the first headings — origin, development, activities — are all covered, although there is no comparison.<sup>54</sup> It also seems likely that the passage on dragons (81.10–83.20) and that on satyrs, if it is by Kekaumenos (80.7–81.9) are attempts at a 'refutation' (*anaskeue*), the exercise which immediately follows the *gnome*; one exemplary refutation by a Byzantine rhetor is a

<sup>51</sup> See Hock and O'Neil, *Chreia*, 33; P. Odorico, 'La Sapienza del Digenis: materiali per lo studio dei *Loci Similes* nella recensione di Grottaferrata', *Byzantion* 59 (1989), 137–46, at 143.

<sup>52</sup> Odorico, 'Digenes', 142–3.

<sup>53</sup> See further Roueché, 'Literary background'.

<sup>54</sup> See C. Roueché, 'Defining the foreign in Kekaumenos', in D. Smythe, ed., *Strangers to Themselves* (Aldershot, 2000), 203–14, especially 210–12.

refutation of the existence of centaurs.<sup>55</sup> But these two last passages are exceptional. There is no other evidence that Kekaumenos had even studied all the *progymnasmata*. It seems to me entirely likely that he had only been properly grounded in the first four, very possibly because he had been to a teacher, who, in the manner recommended by Quintilian, had taught 'grammar' and then the first four *progymnasmata*.

Such a model for education would make good sense. The first *progymnasmata* had a double function. The nature of their content meant that the young who studied them were receiving education not only in self-expression, but also in moral matters. Hermogenes said that one reason for starting with the *mythos* was that those learning it were still young, and it could help in 'moulding their minds towards the better' (Hermogenes 1, 3–5, whence Doxapatres 152–3). The *chreia* was similarly improving, which is why some schemes introduced it before the *diegema*: 'because it too contains instruction on the good and avoidance of evil, they say that the young should be taught about these things first' (Nikolaos 17; cf. Hermogenes 4, 9, Theon 60.16). An excellent example of the interweaving of literary education and moral uplift is contained in a manuscript from Venice, where gnomic sayings are presented and then analysed to illustrate grammatical points.<sup>56</sup>

John of Sardis opens his commentary on the *progymnasmata* by asserting that they only represent a preliminary stage in rhetoric, so that it would be inappropriate to preface them with a discussion of the nature of rhetoric (as Doxapatres was to do). They are incomplete (*atele*) because (his first point) they do not lead to the lawcourt or the church (assuming that that is what the word 'ecclesia' means here): καθὸ τούτων οὐδὲν εἰς δικαστήριον ἢ ἐκκλησίαν εἰσάγεται (3.12). But, in an interesting phrase, he defines the *progymnasmata* as 'little rhetoric': ἱστέον δέ, ὅτι τὰ προγυμνάσματα μικρὰ ῥητορικὴ ἔστιν (3.7). It seems quite possible that this reflects the fact that there were people whose rhetorical education ended with the *progymnasmata* — a 'little rhetoric'.

Doxapatres wrote a far fuller introduction and commentary, drawing on a large number of commentators. Since Aristotle, rhetoric had been defined as having three functions: advisory, forensic and expository. The advisory (*syμβουλευτική*) function of rhetoric was considered to be the oldest, and perhaps the most fundamental.<sup>57</sup> The handbooks regularly discuss which *progymnasmata* prepare for which functions. Some said that the *mythos* and the *diegema* prepared for all three (so Nikolaos 8.16 ff.,

<sup>55</sup> Nikolaos, *Prog.* 5.2 (Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1, 285.28–287.12). See further Roueché, 'Literary background'.

<sup>56</sup> A. Debiassi Gonzato, 'Osservazioni al alcuni esercizi schedografici del Cod. Marc. Gr. XI, 16', *RSBN*, NS 8–9 (1971–2), 109–25.

<sup>57</sup> 'The first of the forms of rhetoric': Theon 3–4, repeated by Doxapatres 139, 18 ff.

15.12–15). Doxapatres discusses the order in which the *progymnasmata* are set out and declares that the first four all prepare for advisory, the first and oldest of the three forms of rhetoric (133. 7–8). The *progymnasmata* which followed could be seen as leading to forensic and epideictic rhetoric.

It seems likely that, in the Byzantine world as in the Roman, pupils will have reached varying levels in the curriculum. Many will have completed the *progymnasmata*, the 'little rhetoric', but gone no further. Perhaps many more completed the first four exercises, possibly at the end of their studies with their *grammaticus*, receiving thereby a grounding in advisory technique, and also in moral values; in the terms of Doxapatres' analysis, they will have found themselves fully prepared for 'advisory' rhetoric. Such a training might well have fitted a man for work in the civil service. The writer of the anonymous 'On strategy', when he is discussing the classes in the state, points out the need for an advisory class (*to symbouleutikon*); 2.14–17); when he goes on to describe them, he uses a gnome, 'A counsellor should not sleep though the night', which is fact one of those regularly cited in the *progymnasmata* as an exemplary gnome (3.23–4).<sup>58</sup>

Moreover, the definition of the first four *progymnasmata* as belonging to advisory rhetoric may well have influenced the way in which advisory literature was written. As has been said, Robert Browning used the example of Kekaumenos when discussing Byzantine literacy. He returned to him in a study on Byzantine literary language,<sup>59</sup> and drew attention to Kekaumenos' protestation that he had not received a 'Hellenic' education:

I am devoid of learning; for I have not studied Greek culture, so that I might obtain tricks of speech, and be taught eloquence. I know that some people will criticise me, catching at my lack of learning; but I have not compiled this as a piece of poetry, for other people, but for you and your brothers, my children, those from my loins, whom God has given me. I have compiled these things, not just in elegant words, and elaborated stories, which have no value, but I have set out the things which I did, and experienced, and saw, and learned, true matters, which are done and which happen every day. Even if the words are perhaps uncultured, yet, if you pay attention honestly to what is said, you will find them very true (75.30–76.9).

Browning pointed out the parallel with other passages: the introductions to the *Strategikon* of Maurice, to the *Tactica* of Leo, to the *De Administrando Imperio* and the *De Ceremoniis* of Constantine Porphyro-

<sup>58</sup> 'Treatise on Strategy' in G. Dennis, ed., *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington, 1985).

<sup>59</sup> 'The language of Byzantine literature', in S. Vryonis, Jr., ed., *The 'Past' in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture* (Malibu, 1978), reprinted in *idem*, *History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World* (Northampton, 1989), XV, 103–33, especially 103–4.

gennetos, and to the medical treatise of Theophanes Chrysobalantes (Nonnos).<sup>60</sup> In all these works the authors emphasize that they are deliberately choosing a simple style and language, which is contrasted with more elaborate and less comprehensible language. Maurice had no concern for 'precise and elegant wording or grandeur of language'; his aim was to produce something 'useful' (*chresimon*; Praef. 27, 31, whence Leo, *Tactica*, Praef.). Constantine Porphyrogennetos uses similar language: 'I wasn't endeavouring to make a display of elegant writing or attic wording, swelling with the unusual and the lofty' (*DAI*, praef.) Both of these passages make a virtue of simplicity, of avoiding an excessive style (*kompos, onkos*). Nonnos wants his work to be comprehensible to those with no 'Greek education' (*paideia Hellenike*), which is exactly what Kekaumenos claims not to have.

This commonplace is repeated in several saints' lives.<sup>61</sup> While in many cases we cannot be certain about the educational level of the author, it is clear in the case of Leo and Constantine — and we are specifically told by Theophanes Nonnos — that these authors could have written in a more elaborate style, had they so wished. The register which they have chosen is the register appropriate to 'useful' or edifying literature — *biopheles* ('useful for life').

This term is used frequently in hagiography, and also to describe the *chreia* and the *gnome*. Theon, in determining the difference between the two, argues that not every *chreia* is *biopheles*; some are merely amusing, in contrast to the *gnome* (96.18). But Nikolaos argues that all of them contain some benefit:

To me they seem, as well as their charm, also to contain good guidance (14–15).

A *gnome* is a general saying which has some advice and guidance on something useful for living (πρός τι τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ χρησίμων) (25, 2–3).

Clearly, some people did not go beyond this register — including, it is implied, the bureaucrats and soldiers for whom many of these works were written. Nonnos is keen not to be taken for one of them, but Kekaumenos is happy to declare himself a member of this group.

One consequence of this conclusion is that we may need to shift slightly the borders of the categories in which we set some Byzantine literature. Advisory, parainetic literature is not only that which advises on moral conduct; it can include treatises on various kinds of activity, including

<sup>60</sup> See J.A. Sonderkamp, 'Theophanes Nonnus: medicine in the circle of Constantine Porphyrogenitus', *DOP* 38 (1984), 29–41.

<sup>61</sup> Browning, 'Language', 104.

military manuals. It is useful to note, for example, that the *Strategikon* of Maurice includes (Book 8) an entire section of gnomic advice for a general: 44 sayings 'fitted to a general' and another 101 simply entitled *Gnomika*.<sup>62</sup> In the *Tactica* of Leo this is expanded to 221 *gnomai* (Book 22) and followed by a moralizing epilogue; it seems likely that Leo was able to expand the *gnomai* in Maurice by using other collections.<sup>63</sup> The military advice included within the *Consilia* of Kekaumenos, which specifically refers to other military manuals, is in the same tradition. Such material was written in the Greek of the administering classes, men who had qualified for their posts by acquiring an education, perhaps the 'little rhetoric' of John of Sardis, but had not proceeded to 'Greek learning'. To such men, with such training, our modern attempt to separate the practical — advice on strategy or medicine — from the moral would seem irrelevant. The two are intertwined: thus Kekaumenos includes advice on what to eat, where to live, among what we might term 'larger' moral issues. In the same way Constantine Porphyrogennetos could insert general moral points in a practical narrative;<sup>64</sup> The linking theme is usefulness; their language and style are not naive, but useful, *chresimos*. This is what connects factual treatises with, for example, collections of stories as in the *Syntipas*: those too were useful: ταύτην οὖν τὴν διήγησιν προῖστόρησε Μοῦσος ὁ Πέρσης πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀναγινωσκόντων ὠφελείαν.<sup>65</sup>

I would argue, therefore, that by close analysis of the work of Kekaumenos we can identify not only a literary category of advisory literature, with its appropriate language and style, but also a social group in Byzantine society: men with a useful education, comprising reading and writing in a basic but sound *koine*, and training in the first of the *progymnasmata* — the basis for 'advisory' rhetoric. Such an education could be combined with profound knowledge of particular specialist areas — military command or medicine, for example; it would be dangerous to label such men as 'not learned', and there is evidence to suggest that Kekaumenos was in touch with current intellectual concerns.<sup>66</sup> Such an education seems to have produced men with reasonably wide-ranging interests, and an appetite for stories — the library of Eustathius Boilas may give us an insight into the sort of things that they might find interesting.<sup>67</sup> In Kekaumenos we meet one of their liveliest and most attractive representatives.

<sup>62</sup> Maurice, *Strategikon*, ed. G. Dennis (Vienna, 1981).

<sup>63</sup> J. Grosidier de Matons discussed the composition of this section of the *Tactica*, but not its origins and function, 'Trois études sur Léon VI', *TM* 5 (1973), 181–242, III, 'Les constitutions tactiques et la damnation memoriae de l'empereur Alexandre', 229–42.

<sup>64</sup> E.g., *DAI* 51.184–86, and commentary *ad loc.*

<sup>65</sup> *Syntipas*, Prologue.

<sup>66</sup> Roueché, 'Literary background'.

<sup>67</sup> 'Will of Eustathius Boilas', ed. P. Lemerle, *Cinq études*, 13–63.



### 3. Teachers and students of rhetoric in the late Byzantine period

C.N. Constantinides

#### *Introduction*

Rhetoric was the most important and perhaps the most time-consuming subject in the framework of the Byzantine education system. Long training and hard exercises by the students were required before they could compose in a language that was written and understood by a only few intellectuals at any one time. Such hard training led to the securing of public offices in the imperial service<sup>1</sup> or higher posts in the Church. This education, therefore, was mostly sponsored by the state and approved by the Church and was accessible only to a small number of students, mainly in the capital and at certain periods in the great cities of the Empire also.

In this paper our concern is not to examine the aesthetic values of rhetoric nor its long linguistic tradition, topics which have been dealt with by others.<sup>2</sup> Here we will refer briefly to the history and development of the subject, its adoption by the Byzantine curriculum, the special textbooks and the methods used for its teaching. We shall then go on to examine the social status of the rhetoricians and the role they played in the Byzantine polity of the thirteenth and fourteenth century.

The study of rhetoric goes back to classical Greece and started to be taught privately by the sophists, who attracted young aristocrats in Athens to whom they provided the skills for social and political advancement.<sup>3</sup> Plato reports a lively discussion between Socrates and the sophist Gorgias which gives clearly the reaction of the philosophers against these initial

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<sup>1</sup> The Emperor Constantius issued a decree in 360, specifying the qualities in learning required by those who were to be promoted to a high post in the imperial service. See *Codex Theodosianus*, 14.1.1. Cf. N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London, 1983), 2.

<sup>2</sup> See R.J.H. Jenkins, 'The Hellenistic origins of Byzantine education', *DOP* 17 (1963), 39–52. G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1972), especially chaps. II–VI, 27–179.

<sup>3</sup> P.E. Easterling and B.M.W. Knox, eds., *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, (Cambridge, 1985), 498–514. See also H. Hunger, *Aspekte der griechischen Rhetorik von Gorgias bis zum Untergang von Byzanz*, Sb. Österr. Akad. Wiss., phil.-hist. Kl. 277.3 (Vienna, 1972).

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aims of rhetoric.<sup>4</sup> However, a century later rhetoric was linked with philosophy by Isocrates who called rhetoric the philosophy of *logos*<sup>5</sup> but above all by Aristotle, whose *Art of Rhetoric* opened the way for the inclusion of this subject in the philosophical schools of the ancient world.<sup>6</sup>

The political and cultural dominance of Athens in the fifth century made the Attic dialect a *lingua franca* in the Greek-speaking world and turned it into a leading language in prose-writing and education. Attic Greek continued to dominate education throughout the next two centuries.<sup>7</sup> By the end of the first century AD grammarians and teachers of rhetoric began to advocate a 'pure' Attic language, despite the development of a simpler language commonly known as the *koine*, which was used for the translation of the Old Testament and the writing of the New. Hereafter professional teachers of rhetoric, such as Philostratos, Aelius Aristeides, Dio Chrysostom and others, avoided using the *koine* and their own writings are full of Attic phrases taken directly from lexica.<sup>8</sup>

This admiration for Attic Greek introduced the concept of *mimesis* and was mainly responsible for the Greek *diglossia*. Both Dionysios of Halikarnassos and Longinos advocated a close study of classical authors and poets and insisted on practical instruction.<sup>9</sup>

This trend was strengthened by the highly gifted and deeply learned Fathers of the Church of the fourth century, especially the Cappadocians, who had all acquired a classical education and wrote their works in Attic Greek, thus giving their approval to the literary and stylistic forms of pagan antiquity. Attic Greek became the language of the most noble minds and the best scholars until the end of the Byzantine empire. Thus rhetoric accommodated itself with the Christian faith, and Christian ideals such as simplicity (*apheleia*), dignity (*semnotes*), nobility of the soul (*gennaiotes psyches*) etc. infiltrated rhetoric and became the aesthetic values of the subject.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Easterling and Knox, *History of Classical Literature*, 511. Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 65–74.

<sup>5</sup> Isocrates, *Panegyric*, 10. Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 66.

<sup>6</sup> Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 66–8.

<sup>7</sup> R. Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek* (Cambridge, 1983), 44–7; Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 67–9; Wilson, *Scholars*, 4–8.

<sup>8</sup> Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 49–50.

<sup>9</sup> Longinos, *On the Sublime*, ed. D.A. Russell (Oxford, 1982), 13,2; Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 49ff; H. Hunger, 'On the imitation (μίμησις) of antiquity in Byzantine Literature', *DOP* 23/24 (1969–70), 17–38, here 17. For the study of Attic Greek special lexica were prepared and anthologies with selected texts were in use in schools.

<sup>10</sup> Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 50; Hunger, 'Mimesis', 18; Wilson, *Scholars*, 8–9 and 11–12; Kustas, *Rhetoric*, 27ff.

*The textbooks of rhetoric and its role in the Byzantine civil service*

However, the only aspect of classical rhetoric that survived and flourished throughout the middle ages was the panegyric. The other two, the political and juridical, lost their importance as the emperor gradually concentrated all political powers into his hands and became responsible for legislation and justice.<sup>11</sup> The textbooks used in teaching panegyric began to be compiled from the Second Sophistic period onwards in an attempt to systematize its instruction. The most popular of these were Hermogenes' *Art of Rhetoric* (second century AD) and Aphthonios' *progymnasmata* (fourth century AD). The preference for these two textbooks continued up to and even after the fall of Constantinople in 1453.<sup>12</sup>

Rhetoric in Byzantium was given priority in the curriculum of the *enkyklios paideia* and higher education in all the imperial schools. This is the case, for instance, with the *Pandidakterion* founded by Theodosios II in 425, where eight chairs, five in Greek and three in Latin, were given to rhetoric.<sup>13</sup> This is also found in other imperial schools of the middle and later periods. For example, we know of a higher school operating during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogennetos in which the teaching of rhetoric was undertaken by Alexander, the bishop of Nicaea.<sup>14</sup> In the eleventh century the *consul of the philosophers* (*hypatos ton philosophon*) Michael Psellos was proud of his deep knowledge of rhetoric and philosophy.<sup>15</sup> We also know a number of teachers of rhetoric (*maistores ton rhetoron*) who taught during the twelfth century in the various departments of the Patriarchal School.<sup>16</sup>

Byzantine emperors recruited their administrators from the public schools, and high officials were selected from among the better-trained students in rhetoric. For the administrative structure of the empire relied on a civil service trained to think and write clearly and precisely. Civil servants had to draft laws or treaties where accuracy of expression was of

<sup>11</sup> Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 67–70.

<sup>12</sup> Hermogenes and Aphthonios prevailed over other rhetorical writers because they were easier to understand. Furthermore, Hermogenes dealt with the whole of rhetoric while Aphthonios had a simple exposition and provided examples for imitation; cf. R. Nadeau, 'The Progymnasmata of Aphthonios in translation', *Speech Monographs* 19 (1952), 264–85; Kustas, *Rhetoric*, 22; C.N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and early Fourteenth Centuries* (1204–c. 1310) (Nicosia, 1982), 152.

<sup>13</sup> A. Moffatt, *School Teachers in the Early Byzantine Empire* (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1972), 40ff.; Paul Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin* (Paris, 1971), 63–4.

<sup>14</sup> Theophanes Continuatus (ed. Bekker), 446.9–14; Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantin*, 265; C.N. Constantinides, 'Η συμβολή του Βυζαντίου στη διάσωση της αρχαίας ελληνικής γραμματείας' (Ioannina, 1995), 33.

<sup>15</sup> Psellos, *Chronographia* (ed. Renauld), vol. 1, VI. 36, p. 135.1–10 and 41, p. 137.3–23.

<sup>16</sup> R. Browning, 'The patriarchal school at Constantinople in the twelfth century', *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 173–7; Constantinides, *Education*, 50–52.

the essence. Some of these high officials were commissioned to write histories, or extol the achievements of the emperors, thus serving the needs of imperial propaganda. They composed special orations for coronations or monodies on the death of Emperors, drew up treaties with foreign nations, represented the empire in missions to other rulers, or became the official encomiasts of the emperors in public ceremonies. There was hardly a ceremony which was not accompanied with an official speech by a high official. Thus rhetoric played its role in the political system of the empire and the training of good officials was the concern of the Emperor himself.<sup>17</sup>

*Teaching of rhetoric and the training of officials in the Nicaean Empire*

In the later period and especially after the conquest of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the educational system became more conservative. At that crucial moment for the continuity of the empire the patrons of learning, the emperor and the patriarch, became refugees in their own country, teachers and students were scattered and libraries and books were looted or left behind in the Latin-occupied capital. This difficult situation for the continuity of learning was soon to be met by the emperors of Nicaea, who re-established schools and sponsored famous private teachers to educate future officials. They also collected books and textbooks from the various parts of the Byzantine world and founded libraries in the main cities of the empire in exile. Thus the long tradition in learning which was shaken by the loss of the capital was re-created in Nicaea thanks to the efforts of the dynasty of the Laskarids.<sup>18</sup>

Let us examine more closely the career of a famous scholar who was born in Latin-ruled Constantinople in 1217, attended the school of the *hiera grammata* or elementary education and that of the *enkyklios paideia* in his native city before he was sent by his father to the Byzantine Emperor in Nicaea for further studies. The man in question is the historian George Akropolites. In 1234 the Emperor John III Vatatzes, who seems to have realized the necessity of training the civil servants of the next generation, decided to support a private teacher, Theodore Hexapterygus, to teach, as a matter of urgency, five young men destined to the imperial service. Akropolites, who owed his distinguished career in the imperial service mainly to his education and imperial patronage, gives us details of the ceremony in which the emperor addressed these students before they were placed under Hexapterygus' tutelage. Turning to the young Akropolites the Emperor said:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Constantinides, *Education*, 154–5; Wilson, *Scholars*, 2–4.

<sup>18</sup> M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: government and society under the Laskarids of Nicaea (1204–1261)* (Oxford, 1975), 174–81; Constantinides, *Education*, 5–27.

<sup>19</sup> Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg), vol. 1, 49.10–21; Constantinides, *Education*, 9–10.

I send these students to the school taking them from Nicaea but I send you to be taught with them taking you from my own palace; prove that you really come from my house and exert yourself in your studies ... and if you become master of philosophy you will receive great honours and rewards because only the Emperor and the Philosopher are the most famous of all men.

The ideals of a society are summarized in this speech; the philosopher came only second in fame after the emperor, the head of the Christian rulers of the world. By philosopher he meant the leading scholar in every period.

The teacher, Hexapterygos, to whom these students were sent for training, is known more from this incident than from his surviving rhetorical works. Akropolites says that he was not a great scholar in other fields but he had acquired fame as a teacher of rhetoric.<sup>20</sup> In fact some of Hexapterygos' rhetorical tales (*diegemata*) probably composed for these five students, have survived in a thirteenth-century manuscript, now in Vienna (Phil. Gr. 254), containing mostly rhetorical material, which may have been used in a school during the Nicene period.<sup>21</sup>

Akropolites continued his studies in philosophy and mathematics under Nikephoros Blemmydes, who took over the group of five students after Hexapterygos' death.<sup>22</sup> This good training opened up the imperial service to Akropolites and he had rapid promotion, originally in the financial sector (*megas logariastes*), then in the administrative (*logothetes tou genikou*), and was trusted with the education of the heir apparent.<sup>23</sup> He accompanied the emperor in his campaigns in Europe in the 1240s and composed rhetorical letters to the inhabitants of the towns that were recovered.<sup>24</sup> Later under Michael VIII Palaiologos, Akropolites was promoted to grand logothete (*megas logothetes*), that is, the principal adviser to the emperor and head of the imperial service, and in 1274, as representative of Michael VIII

<sup>20</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 49.24–50.1.

<sup>21</sup> H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 1961), 364–5. Constantinides, *Education*, 10 and 152. W. Hörandner, 'Die Progymnasmata des Theodoros Hexapterygos', in W. Hörandner et al., eds., *Byzantios, Festschrift für Herbert Hunger zum 70. Geburtstag* (Vienna, 1984), 147–62 (text 150–58).

<sup>22</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 50.3–6; Nicephori Blemmydae, *Autobiographia*, ed. J.A. Munitiz (Brepols–Turnhout, 1984), § 49, pp. 26.3–27.1; ed. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1896), p. 29.7–13; A. Markopoulos, 'Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως Ἀνέκδοτον ἐγκώμιον πρὸς τὸν Γεώργιον Ἀκροπολίτην', *EEBS* 36 (1968), 115.135–9.

<sup>23</sup> Akropolites, vol. 2, vii–xiii, xv, and p. 3 (title); R. Macrides, *A Translation and Historical Commentary of George Akropolites' History* (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1978), 26–42; Constantinides, *Education*, 17–19, 31–2.

<sup>24</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 79.1–7.

at the Council of Lyons, he signed the Union of the Churches on behalf of the emperor.<sup>25</sup>

Apart from Hexapterygos and Blemmydes, the Emperor John III Vatatzes seems to have also employed George Babouskomites, a teacher of logic and rhetoric, for the training of future state and ecclesiastical officials. The future patriarch John Bekkos was one of his students.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, the well-educated emperor Theodore II Laskaris, who followed a long training under Blemmydes and Akropolites, took extra pains for the education of officials and founded a school attached to the monastery of St Tryphon in Nicaea for the teaching of poetry and rhetoric.<sup>27</sup> He is also reported to have founded libraries in the main cities of the empire which led to the creation of intellectual groups and the flourishing of learning.<sup>28</sup> In his surviving correspondence there is a certain amount of information concerning the education of imperial officials. From 1240 onwards, as heir to the throne, he insisted on his officials undergoing further training. A number of them were sent to a teacher to improve their knowledge of philosophy and rhetoric. He followed their progress and warned them how difficult a career in the palace was.<sup>29</sup> He sent another of his secretaries to Akropolites to be taught the last chapter of rhetoric.<sup>30</sup> He praised his secretaries — Balsamon for his good standard of rhetoric and Manikaïtes for his rhetoric and syllogistic.<sup>31</sup> Finally, his secretary Nikolaos Kostomyres shared with him admiration of the ancient Hellenistic city of Pergamon.<sup>32</sup> These examples can easily be multiplied and can include bishops and officials of the Church.

<sup>25</sup> Pachymeres (ed. Failler), vol. 2, V.17, p. 493.1–3. D.M. Nicol, 'The Greeks and the Union of the Churches: the preliminaries to the Second Council of Lyons, 1261–1274', in J.A. Watt et al., eds., *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn* (Dublin, 1961), 454–80; *idem*, 'The Byzantine reaction to the Second Council of Lyons, 1274', in G.J. Cumming and D. Baker eds., *Studies in Church History* 7 (Cambridge, 1971), 113–46; H. Evert-Kappesowa, 'La société Byzantine et l'Union de Lyons', *BSI* 10 (1949), 28–41; C.N. Constantinides, 'Byzantine scholars and the Union of Lyons (1274)', in R. Beaton and C. Roueché, eds., *The Making of Byzantine History: studies dedicated to D.M. Nicol* (Aldershot, 1993), 86–93, with further bibliography.

<sup>26</sup> V. Laurent 'La correspondance inédite de Georges Babouscomitès', in *Eis mnemen Spyridonos Lambrou* (Athens, 1935), 83–100; Constantinides, *Education*, 15–16.

<sup>27</sup> N. Festa, ed., *Theodori Ducae Lascaris, Epistulae CCXVII* (Florence, 1898), Ep. 217, p. 271; Constantinides, *Education*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Skoutariotes, ed. C. Sathas, *MB*, vol. 7 (Venice, 1894), 535–6.

<sup>29</sup> Laskaris, *Epistulae*, no. 121, pp. 168.24–169.76.

<sup>30</sup> Laskaris, *Epistulae*, no. 51, p. 75.89–91.

<sup>31</sup> Laskaris, *Epistulae*, no. 115, pp. 159.1–160.1 and no. 139, pp. 193.10–194.16.

<sup>32</sup> Laskaris, *Epistulae*, no. 80, pp. 107–8, esp. p. 108.33–34 and no. 138, p. 195. Constantinides, *Education*, 20; Wilson, *Scholars*, 219–21.

*The return of the rhetoricians to Constantinople*

After the recapture of Constantinople in 1261 much of what had been destroyed had to be restored. This included education for lay and ecclesiastical officials, and administrators who were urgently needed.<sup>33</sup> To meet the great demand the imperial higher school was re-established and George Akropolites became its head. Shortly after, the Patriarchal School was re-opened and the monk Maximos Holobolos was appointed *rhetor* of the Church.<sup>34</sup> The existing evidence suggests that a great number of students attended these two institutions; on the whole civil servants went to the imperial school while ecclesiastical officials went to the patriarchal.<sup>35</sup>

At this significant moment for Constantinople the rhetoricians were there to train the younger generation of administrators; they were also available to write encomia for the emperors and *laudes* or *ekphraseis* for their capital and its beauties. A few examples may suffice. On the occasion when the cathedral of Hagia Sophia was handed over to the patriarch Arsenios, George Akropolites delivered a speech before the high and ecclesiastic officials and a great audience, which unfortunately does not survive, though its content is reported in his history.<sup>36</sup> From 1265 onwards the *rhetor* of the Church, Maximos Holobolos, who seems to have also been the head of the Patriarchal School, delivered four annual orations presenting the achievements of the emperor Michael VIII, who added to his names that of the New Constantine.<sup>37</sup> The teacher of rhetoric George of Cyprus wrote and delivered an encomium for Michael Palaiologos c. 1273 and ten years later an encomium for his successor Andronikos II Palaiologos.<sup>38</sup> The list of the encomiasts of Andronikos II is long and he seems to be the most eulogized emperor of all periods.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Pachymeres, vol. 1, II.31 and 33, especially pp. 219.5–10 and 221.18–223.8. D.M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1993), 41–2.

<sup>34</sup> Constantinides, *Education*, 32–5 and 52–6, with further references.

<sup>35</sup> W. Lameere, *La tradition manuscrite de la correspondance de Grégoire de Chypre, patriarche de Constantinople (1283–1289)* (Brussels–Rome, 1937), 185.8–20; the text of a theological dialogue ed. by A. Vasiliev, *Anecdota Graeca* (Moscow, 1893), vol. 1, 180, speaks of 336 students of Holobolos.

<sup>36</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 188.19–28.

<sup>37</sup> M. Treu, ed., *Manuelis Holoboli Orationes, I–II* (Programm des Königlichen Victoria–Gymnasiums zu Potsdam [Potsdam, 1906–7], text pp. 30–98), three orations; the first ed. also by X. Siderides, in *EEBS* 3 (1926), 168–91; a fourth oration ed. by L. Previale, *BZ* 42 (1943), 15–45. See also R. Macrides, 'The New Constantine and New Constantinople – 1261?', *BMGS* 6 (1980), 13–41, with further references.

<sup>38</sup> J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1829), 313–58 and 359–93 (= *PG* 142: 345–86 and 387–418).

<sup>39</sup> We know of a number of scholars who wrote encomia for Andronikos II. Among them are Gregory of Cyprus, Nikephoros Choumnos, Maximos Planoudes, Theodore Metochites, Nikolaos Lampenos, Theodore Hyrtakenos, Nikephoros Gregoras and Michael Gabras; cf. Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 129–30, with references to the sources.

*Teachers acquire and edit the works of ancient rhetoricians*

The great problem facing higher education was the lack of books, given the destruction that had occurred in 1204. Therefore, the ancient *rhetors* had to be rediscovered and edited by teachers. Certain of these authors, such as Demosthenes as well as Aelius Aristeides, Libanios and others, became fashionable in the thirteenth century.

We have considerable information in the correspondence of the teacher of rhetoric George of Cyprus referring to his painstaking efforts to establish a good copy of the *rhetor* Aelius Aristeides. To complete his own volume which he himself had copied he gave it to his student Neokaisareites to collate with another copy.<sup>40</sup> He then sent it to Constantine Meliteniotes asking him either to correct it or to make a sign on the margin where correction was needed.<sup>41</sup> His Aristeides was lent to somebody to be copied but the careless scribe had damaged his book with ink and oil and he therefore requested Constantine Akropolites' copy to correct his own.<sup>42</sup> Even during his patriarchate (1283–9) George of Cyprus continued his interest in Aristeides and asked again for Akropolites' copy to complete two orations of the rhetor, for he wanted his book to remain an exact copy and a model edition for future generations.<sup>43</sup> It was probably after he had completed his own volume that he undertook to correct the copy in the possession of the princess Thedora Raoulaina, which may well have been her autograph volume, now in the Vatican collection (Vat. Gr. 1899).<sup>44</sup>

That George of Cyprus used the classical *rhetors* for his teaching is indicated by the fact that he borrowed a volume of Demosthenes from the bibliophile Raoulaina and kept it for some time. The princess asked for her book to be returned and pleaded for her copy to be kept clean during the process of copying, due to take place after the period of fasting when

<sup>40</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, *Epistulae* (ed. S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 1 [1908], 425–6), no. 26 (Lameere, no. 26).

<sup>41</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, *Epistulae* (ed. S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 3 [1909], 13–14), no. 75 (Lameere, no. 75).

<sup>42</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, *Epistulae* (ed. S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 1 [1908], 434–5), no. 38 (Lameere, no. 38).

<sup>43</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, *Epistulae* (ed. S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 5 [1910], 216), no. 169 (Lameere, no. 183).

<sup>44</sup> S. Kugeas, 'Zur Geschichte der münchener Thukydideshandschrift Augustanus F', *BZ* 16 (1907), 598.12–14 (Lameere, no. 227); cf. C.N. Constantinides, 'Some notes on the correspondence of Gregory of Cyprus', *Epeteris of the Cyprus Research Centre* 18 (1991), 114; Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El Patriarca Gregorio de Chipre (ca. 1240–1290) y la transmisión de los textos clásicos en Bizancio* (Nueva Roma 1; Madrid, 1996), 32–50. For Raoulaina's Vatican manuscript see A. Turyn, *Codices Graeci Vaticani saeculis XIII et XIV scripti annorumque notis instructi* (Vatican, 1964), 63–5 and pls. 36 and 168c; E. Follieri, *Codices Graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae selecti* (Vatican, 1969), 60–62, pl. 40. See now E. Gamillscheg, D. Harlfinger, and H. Hunger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800–1600*, III. *Rom mit dem Vatikan* (Vienna, 1997), A, no. 206, p. 85.

parchment would have been available.<sup>45</sup> Indeed the personal volume of George of Cyprus, copied in his own hand and by a collaborator, has been identified in Paris (Par. Gr. 2998) and contains, apart from Demosthenes, works of Aeschines, Aelius Aristides, Libanios, Themistios, Synesios and Plato.<sup>46</sup>

Another tenth-century volume of Demosthenes (Paris. Gr. 2934) originates from the monastery of Sosandra, founded by John III Vatatzes in Magnesia, while two dated textbooks of rhetoric come from the Nicaean empire; both are now in the Vatican collection (Vat. Gr. 105 [AD 1244–54], and 106 [AD 1251]). Though specific evidence is lacking, all three manuscripts may be connected with the scholar emperor Theodore II Laskaris and his circle.<sup>47</sup>

Early in the fourteenth century another teacher, George Lakapenos, possessed a volume of Libanios and wrote a commentary on his letters.<sup>48</sup> The bibliophile Theodore Skoutariotes, who became bishop of Kyzikos in the 1270s, owned among other books a volume containing Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* (the present Par. Gr. 1741).<sup>49</sup> Michael Eskamatismenos, a church official, owned in the 1270s a book on rhetoric and the commentary of Doxapatres on Hermogenes.<sup>50</sup>

A few years later, however, the teacher Maximos Planoudes wrote his own commentary on the *Corpus Hermogenianum*. Though Planoudes' work is mainly derivative, its great value lies in the fact that he relied upon the older tradition which remained unaffected by the inclusion of Christian authors by commentators on Hermogenes in the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Kugeas, 'Münchener Thukydideshandschrift', 598, 1–5, 10–17, 24 ff. (Lameere no. 227).

<sup>46</sup> D. Harlfinger, in I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius: sa vie, son oeuvre, sa survie* (Berlin–New York, 1987), 277–8 and pls. 4, 5; E. Gamillscheg, D. Harlfinger and H. Hunger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten*, II, *Frankreich* (Vienna, 1989), A, no. 99, pp. 57–8, with further bibliography. See also I. Pérez Martin, *El Patriarca Gregorio*, 25–8.

<sup>47</sup> H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1888), 63. G. Prato, 'Un autografo di Teodoro II Lascaris imperatore di Nicaea', *JÖB* 31 (1981), 249–58; Turyn, *Godices Graeci Vaticani*, 39–41 (pls. 11–13); Wilson, *Scholars*, 219, 225.

<sup>48</sup> S. Lindsdam, *Georgii Lacapeni et Andronici Zaridae epistulae XXXII cum epimerismis Lacapeni* (Göteborg, 1924), no. 16, p. 114.27–29 and scholium.

<sup>49</sup> D. Harlfinger and R. Reinsch, 'Die Aristotelica des Paris. Gr. 1741', *Philologus* 114 (1970), 28–50; see especially the poetic colophon on f. 301v. Constantinides, *Education*, 139.

<sup>50</sup> See I. Mercati et Pius Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani Graeci*, vol. 1, *Codices 1–329* (Rome, 1923), 249–50; C.N. Constantinides, 'The scholars and their books in the late thirteenth century', *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Akten II.4*, *JÖB* 32.4 (1982), 16–17.

<sup>51</sup> Kustas, *Rhetoric*, 21–2.



*Teachers of rhetoric compose their own model works*

Teachers of the period not only acquired and edited the works of the earlier tradition of rhetoric, they also wrote their own examples on the *progymnasmata* for their students. We have seen Hexapterygos' six tales (*diegemata*) which survive in a textbook for rhetoric now in Vienna (Phil. Gr. 254, fols. 120r–125r), published only recently.<sup>52</sup>

George of Cyprus wrote seventeen fables (*mythoi*), three tales,<sup>53</sup> a *chreia*,<sup>54</sup> an encomium *maris*,<sup>55</sup> a characterization (*ethopoia*),<sup>56</sup> and four declamations (*meletai*), two of which are responses (*antilogiai*) to Libanios, and were included by a modern editor in the edition of Libanios.<sup>57</sup> His collection of proverbs may have also been useful to his teaching of rhetoric.<sup>58</sup>

George Pachymeres wrote his own examples on all the chapters of the *progymnasmata* of Aphthonios<sup>59</sup> and thirteen declamations.<sup>60</sup> Worth mentioning is his imaginary description (*ekphrasis*) of the equestrian statue of the emperor Justinian I standing in front of the *Augousteion* near Hagia Sophia, which undoubtedly is based on Prokopios (*Buildings* I, 2).<sup>61</sup>

Maximos Planoudes wrote a comparison between winter and spring,<sup>62</sup> prepared a collection of proverbs<sup>63</sup> and wrote a long commentary on the *Corpus Hermogenianum* based on earlier commentators.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>52</sup> See above, n. 21.

<sup>53</sup> His fables, tales and characterization are edited by S. Eustratiades, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Κυπρίου Ἐπιστολαὶ καὶ μῦθοι* (Alexandria, 1910), 115–30. A new improved edition appeared recently by S. Kotsambassi, 'Die Progymnasmata des Gregor von Zypern', *Hellenika* 43 (1993), 45–63 (text, 51–63); C.N. Constantinides, 'George of Cyprus as a teacher', *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Cypriot Studies*, vol. 2 (Nicosia, 1986), 435.

<sup>54</sup> *Chreia*: J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1830), 269–73 (= PG 142: 417C–421C).

<sup>55</sup> *Encomium maris*: PG 142: 433A–444C.

<sup>56</sup> See above n. 53.

<sup>57</sup> Declamations: M. Schmidt, *Georgii Cyprii declamationis e codice Leidensi editae* (Iena, 1875–7) (two declamations); O. Miller, *Gregorii Cyprii declamatio inedita* (Oels, 1890); R. Foerster, *Libanii Opera*, vol. 6 (Leipzig, 1911), 49–82 and vol. 7 (Leipzig, 1913), 142–79. A fourth declamation against an encomium of Synesios was attributed to him and edited recently by I. Pérez Martín, *Il Patriarca Gregorio*, 361–97 (with a Spanish translation).

<sup>58</sup> E.L. Leutsch and F.G. Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, vol. 1 (Göttingen, 1839), 349–78 and vol. 2, ed. E.L. Leutsch (Göttingen, 1851), 53–134 (= PG 142: 445A–470D).

<sup>59</sup> Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1, 551–96.

<sup>60</sup> J.F. Boissonade, *Georgii Pachymeris Declamationes XIII* (Paris, 1848).

<sup>61</sup> See Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1, 578–83; cf. Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 193.

<sup>62</sup> J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1830), 310–19; and also M. Treu, *Maximi Planudis, Comparatio hiemis et veris* (Progr. Gymnas. Ohlau, 1878).

<sup>63</sup> E. Kurtz, *Die Sprichwörtersammlung des Maximos Planudes* (Leipzig, 1886).

<sup>64</sup> Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 5, 212–590. See also above, n. 51.

Constantine Akropolites, who also taught rhetoric, wrote *progymnasmata* which comprise four fables,<sup>65</sup> a tale,<sup>66</sup> a vituperation (*psogos*),<sup>67</sup> a comparison,<sup>68</sup> five characterizations,<sup>69</sup> a description<sup>70</sup> and a thesis.<sup>71</sup> What is unusual, however, is that these *progymnasmata* derive their material mainly from religious sources, a tendency which we know already from the twelfth century.<sup>72</sup>

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, the church historian, composed also *progymnasmata*, which indicate his teaching of rhetoric, and comprise fables, a tale, a *chreia* and a saying.<sup>73</sup>

Theodore Metochites left us a comparison between Demosthenes and Aelius Aristides,<sup>74</sup> an encomium of Nicaea,<sup>75</sup> an encomium of Constantinople (so far unpublished),<sup>76</sup> two unpublished encomia for Andronikos II,<sup>77</sup> and a number of mostly unpublished funeral orations in prose or verse for Theodora Palaiologina, the wife of Michael VIII (died 1303),<sup>78</sup> Eirene of Montferrat (died 1317),<sup>79</sup> Michael IX Palaiologos (died 1320),<sup>80</sup> and Joseph the Philosopher (died c. 1330).<sup>81</sup>

<sup>65</sup> A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Κωνσταντίνου Ἀκροπολίτου μῦθοι', *DIEEE* 3 (1891), 445–50.

<sup>66</sup> Unedited in Hierosol. Patriarc. 40, ff. 8r–12r.

<sup>67</sup> Unedited in Hierosol. Patriarc. 40, ff. 12r–13v.

<sup>68</sup> Edited by Ph. Photopoulos, in *Nea Sion* 11 (1911), 863–4.

<sup>69</sup> R. Romano, 'Etopee inedite di Constantino Acropolita', in *Talariskos: Studia Graeca Antonio Garzya sexagenario a discipulis oblata* (Napoli, 1987), 311–38 (text 324–33).

<sup>70</sup> Edited by Ph. Photopoulos, in *Nea Sion* 12 (1912), 279–80.

<sup>71</sup> Edited by Ph. Photopoulos, in *Nea Sion* 11 (1911), 864–9.

<sup>72</sup> See A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Hierosolymitike Bibliothek*, vol. 1 (St Petersburg, 1891), 121. See now the edition by Romano (as in n. 69 above). The twelfth-century examples come from Michael Italikos (Browning, 'Patriarchal School', 195, n. 8) and Nikephoros Basilakes (ed. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1, 466ff). Thirteen of Basilakes' twenty-three characterizations have religious subjects (i.e. nos. 1, 7, 8, 13–22).

<sup>73</sup> J. Glettner, 'Die Progymnasmata des Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopulos', *BZ* 33 (1933), 1–12, 255–70.

<sup>74</sup> M. Gigante, 'Il saggio critico di Teodoro Metochites su Demostene e Aristide', *La Parola del Passato* 20 (1965), 51–92 (text 74–92).

<sup>75</sup> Sathas, *MB*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1872), 139–53.

<sup>76</sup> See Vind. Phil. Gr. 95, ff. 233v–302v; cf. E. Fenster, *Laudes Constantinopolitanae* (Munich, 1968), 196–211.

<sup>77</sup> Unedited in Vind. Phil. Gr. 95, ff. 81r–96v and 145v–158r; cf. Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 130.

<sup>78</sup> Unedited in Vind. Phil. Gr. 95, ff. 179r–189r.

<sup>79</sup> Unedited in Paris. Gr. 1776, ff. 100r–108v; see now J.M. Featherstone, *Theodore Metochites's poems 'To Himself'* (Vienna, 2000), 12.

<sup>80</sup> Unedited in Paris. Gr. 1776, ff. 119r–125v.

<sup>81</sup> M. Treu, 'Der Philosoph Joseph', *BZ* 8 (1899), 1–64 (text 2–31).

There is also the description of the Garden of St Anne by Theodore Hyrtakenos, a teacher of rhetoric sponsored by the state; written early in the fourteenth century, this is probably based on an icon or painting.<sup>82</sup>

It seems that writing rhetorical works was also a favourite pastime for men of letters. A notable example is provided by the encomia which the emperor Theodore II Laskaris composed for his father John III,<sup>83</sup> his teacher George Akropolites,<sup>84</sup> for the city of Nicaea,<sup>85</sup> his encomium for spring,<sup>86</sup> another for St Tryphon,<sup>87</sup> whose church he re-founded in Nicaea and in which he established a public school for poetry and rhetoric; in addition he wrote a funeral oration on Frederick II, whom he had never seen in person.<sup>88</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not know precisely the methods or the various stages of teaching rhetoric. The little we know comes from the autobiography of George of Cyprus and refers to the teaching of George Akropolites after 1261. He speaks of at least two stages in teaching. This may well mean that the teaching started with the *progymnasmata* of Aphthonios, when the students were asked to write their own exercises (*gymnasiai*), and after studying the analytics and syllogistic of Aristotle they were involved in a serious study of the *Art of Rhetoric* of Hermogenes.<sup>89</sup> But that this process of education demanded serious study of the ancient rhetoricians is confirmed by George of Cyprus' own experience. He tells us how his fellow students poked fun at him because of his inferior rhetorical essays. However, by dedicating himself seriously to the study of the classical orators, in a short while his essays became models and were admired by his peers.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>82</sup> J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1831), 59–70. See now a detailed analysis of this description by M.-Lyon Dolezal and M. Mavroudi, 'Theodore Hyrtakenos' description of the garden of St Anne and the *ekphrasis* of gardens, in A. Littlewood, ed., *Byzantine Garden Culture* (Washington, D.C., 2001), 105–58.

<sup>83</sup> This encomium has only partly survived; cf. M.A. Andreeva, in *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 10 (1938), 133–4; Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 129.

<sup>84</sup> Edited by A. Markopoulos, in *EEBS* 36 (1968), 104–18.

<sup>85</sup> L. Bachmann, *Theodori II Ducae Lascaris imperatoris in laudem Nicaeae urbis oratio* (Rostock, 1847); for a new edition of the encomium, see S. Georgiopolou, *Theodore II Dukas Laskaris (1222–1258) as an Author and Intellectual of the XIIIth Century* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1990), 140–72. For the text and an English translation by J. Tulchin and C. Foss, see C. Foss, *Nicaea: a Byzantine capital and its praises* (Brookline, Mass., 1996), 132–63.

<sup>86</sup> See Ch. Astruc, 'La tradition manuscrite des oeuvres oratoires profane de Théodore II Lascaris', *TM* 1 (1965), 397.

<sup>87</sup> *AASS*, vol. 100, cols. 352–7; *BHG* (3rd ed.), no. 1858d.

<sup>88</sup> St. N. Dragoumes, in *Byzantis* 2 (1911–12), 404–13 (text, 406–13) and by J.B. Papadopoulos, *Theodore II Lascaris, empereur de Nicée* (Paris, 1908), 183–9.

<sup>89</sup> Lameere, *Tradition*, 185.20–23.

<sup>90</sup> Lameere, *Tradition*, 185.25–187.12.

*The social status and the rivalry of the scholars and rhetoricians*

Though amity between teachers and officials was the norm and intellectual groups were formed at all times to exchange books and ideas and to correct each other's work, there are a few instances in the period under review when rivalry and even enmity can be observed. The teaching post in the higher imperial school of Constantinople after 1261 carried such prestige that it drew the envy of other high officials. The *sebastokrator* John Tornikes, who was related by marriage to the emperor Michael VIII, wrote a letter to the head of this school, George Akropolites, saying that:<sup>91</sup>

You are eating in vain the bread of the emperor by sitting in Constantinople, since I can come and do your job, that is, teach the *Organon* to the children and carry out the duties of the *sekretes*.

George Akropolites very cleverly retained in his reply the words of Tornikes to demonstrate that his training in rhetoric was limited. He went on in a highly admirable style to say that he was ready to give up his professorship and exchange his position in the imperial service with Tornikes' military post, provided that this proposal was accepted by the emperor.<sup>92</sup> It is not therefore surprising that this is the only surviving letter of George Akropolites, though we have forty-one letters addressed to him by Theodore II Laskaris, representing mostly answers of letters sent to the royal student by his tutor.<sup>93</sup>

A few years later the teacher of rhetoric George of Cyprus was blamed by a colleague, George Pachymeres, for not writing for pleasure, while some mistakes he had made in one of his letters were maliciously exaggerated.<sup>94</sup> It is possible that this rival group opposing George of Cyprus may have been connected with the Patriarchal School.

The famous teacher Maximos Planoudes speaks of those who were ready to accuse him of conversion to Catholicism, had he accepted an appointment for a mission to the Armenians of Cilicia c. 1295–6. But with God's help, as he says, he avoided both the embassy and the trouble.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Akropolites, vol. 2, 67.5–9.

<sup>92</sup> Akropolites, vol. 2, 67.10–69.28. It is interesting to note that a few years later John Tornikes' daughter Maria married Constantine Akropolites, the son of the great logothete; see D.M. Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites. A prosopographical note', *DOP* 19 (1965), 249–56, esp. 253 and pl. II.

<sup>93</sup> Laskaris, *Epistulae*, nos. 49–89, pp. 67–116.

<sup>94</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, *Epistulae* (ed. S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 3 [1909], 37–8), no. 105 (Lameere, no. 108) and (*EPh* 3 [1909], 36) no. 104 (Lameere, no. 107); Constantinides, *Education*, 46–7.

<sup>95</sup> Planoudes, *Epistulae* (ed. Treu), no. 112, pp. 152.64–153.85 and no. 114, p. 159.134–142.

The well-known enmity between Theodore Metochites and Nikephoros Choumnos, which was the result of personal rather than intellectual ambitions, created two rival scholarly groups in the capital and ended only with their deaths.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless they did everything to demonstrate their lead over others in the field of rhetoric and philosophy, while Metochites took up astronomy at the age of forty-three to gain an advantage over his rival.<sup>97</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion teachers and students of rhetoric continued to the very end to study hard and to imitate the Attic Greek language and ancient Greek oratory, and to write encomia for emperors and funeral orations for empresses. The emperor Manuel II while in Paris c. 1400, where he was desperately requesting military assistance from European rulers for his besieged capital, admired and wrote a description (*ekphrasis*) of a tapestry in the Louvre.<sup>98</sup> And full of joy for the defeat of Bayezid by Timur-lenk at Ankara (1402), he wrote an imaginary characterization (*ethopoia*) of what the victorious Mongol ruler might have said to his humiliated captive, the Ottoman sultan.<sup>99</sup> Manuel Chrysoloras while in Rome on a similar mission for western assistance found it useful to write a letter to the future emperor, John VIII, in Constantinople, in the form of a comparison (*synkrisis*) between the Old and the New Rome.<sup>100</sup> And the historian Doukas gives the reply of Constantine Palaiologos, the last emperor of the Romans, in pure Attic Greek when he refuses to surrender the city to Mehmet.<sup>101</sup>

This tradition of rhetoric in Attic style was to survive the loss of Constantinople and, taken to the West, would be taught to the Italian humanists by refugee scholars who found a hospitable home in Renaissance Italy.<sup>102</sup> It was to remain part of the educational system of the

<sup>96</sup> See especially, I. Ševčenko, *Études sur la polemique entre Theodore Métochites et Nicéphore Choumnos. La vie intellectuelle et politique à Byzance sous les premiers Paléologues* (Brussels, 1962). See also J. Verpeaux, *Nicéphore Choumnos, homme d'état et humaniste byzantin (ca. 1250/1255-1327)* (Paris, 1959), *passim*.

<sup>97</sup> For the study of astronomy by Metochites see Sathas, *MB*, vol. 1 (Venice, 1872), pp. ρ'-ρβ'. M. Treu, *Dichtungen des Gross-Logotheten Theodoros Metochites* (Programm des Victoria-Gymnasium zu Potsdam Ostern 1895; Potsdam, 1895), vv. 630-72.

<sup>98</sup> PG 156: 577-80.

<sup>99</sup> PG 156: 580-1.

<sup>100</sup> PG 156: 23-53.

<sup>101</sup> Doukas, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1834), 280. The language spoken at that time in Constantinople is given by a high official of Constantine Palaiologos, the historian George Sphrantzes, in his *Chronicon Minus* (PG 156: 1025-80).

<sup>102</sup> In Ottoman-ruled Constantinople, Matthaios Kamariotes, appointed *megas* rhetor of the Church by the ecumenical Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios, taught the *progymnasmata* of Aphthonios and Hermogenes' rhetoric in the Patriarchal School and wrote his own

Greek nation up to the twentieth century in the form of a 'pure' language (*katharevousa*) and would only be replaced with demotic Greek by a law passed in 1975.<sup>103</sup>

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commentary on both (Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1, 121–6 and vol. 6, 601–44). At the same time Cardinal Bessarion was composing a long encomium for his native city of Trebizond (S.P. Lampros in *NE* 13 (1916), 145–204, text at 146–94). The Italian humanists were introduced to Attic Greek through the *Erotemata* of Manuel Chrysoloras, the translations into Latin of Greek orators, the teaching of rhetoric by the Byzantine émigré scholars, as well as the edition by Aldus Manutius of a corpus of Greek orators (c. 1499–1513). See A. Patterson, *Hermogenes and the Renaissance: seven ideas of style* (Princeton, 1970); J. Monfasani, 'The Byzantine rhetorical tradition and the Renaissance', in *Renaissance Eloquence: studies in the theory and practice of Renaissance rhetoric*, ed. J.J. Murphy (Berkeley, California, 1983), 174–87, esp. 177–87.

<sup>103</sup> In November 1901 the translation of the gospels into demotic Greek by A. Palles led the students of the University of Athens to fierce demonstrations, which resulted in the withdrawal of the translation.



## 4. Byzantine imperial panegyric as advice literature (1204–c. 1350)

Dimiter G. Angelov

Imperial panegyric occupies a central place among the genres constituting the occasional oratory of praise and blame (epideictic rhetoric), in which the Byzantines excelled throughout the centuries. A time-honoured courtly tradition, the recitation of panegyrics in praise of the ruler added lustre to ceremonies and provided a tribune for the continual articulation of an age-old Roman and Byzantine ideology of kingship. In the twelfth century, the delivery of prose panegyrics was a solemn and periodic event. The Master of the Rhetors, an official holding a post in the patriarchal administration, had the duty to deliver an imperial encomium at Epiphany (January 6).<sup>1</sup> These encomia couched in a sophisticated language have helped produce and perpetuate the image of Byzantine court *literati* as individuals wont to excessive adulation of their rulers. Yet the role and function of imperial panegyric has not yet been sufficiently investigated to permit the passing of a definite and unqualified judgment. In studying these complex rhetorical texts, one must always differentiate between different periods, different authors, and proceed from a close analysis of the text and the context of its composition.

Here we will address an aspect of imperial panegyric presenting a rather different image of the court orators: the function of imperial panegyric as advice literature and the role of the panegyrists as lobbyists advocating public causes. We will look at panegyrics in prose composed in the period after the disaster of 1204, a period in which Komnenian rhetorical practices met with a mixed reception in the Laskarid empire of Nicaea (1204–61) and the restored empire of the Palaiologoi. The office of the Rhetor lapsed in Nicaea.<sup>2</sup> In 1265 the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos

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<sup>1</sup> Numerous epiphany panegyrics have survived from the reign of Manuel I Komnenos and the Angeloi emperors (1185–1204). On this rhetorical practice, see P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 248.

<sup>2</sup> The historian Pachymeres mentions the appointment of Manuel Holobolos as Rhetor in 1265 in the context of Michael VIII Palaiologos' revival of old customs after the recapture of Constantinople. See Pachymeres (ed. Failler), vol. 2, IV. 14, p. 369. No Rhetors are attested in Nicaea. Prose encomia by only three authors (Niketas Choniates, Jacob of Bulgaria, and Theodore II Laskaris) addressing Nicaean emperors have survived.

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(1259–82) revived the practice of the annual imperial panegyric, now delivered at Christmas, and appointed Manuel Holobolos (died before 1310), a former Laskarid supporter, as Rhetor.<sup>3</sup> Yet, despite Michael VIII's efforts, imperial panegyric in prose never re-established itself as part of the annual ceremonial cycle of the court. No oration after Holobolos' three pieces was delivered at Christmas nor was the work of a Rhetor performed, despite the fact his office continued to exist until 1453 and even afterwards.<sup>4</sup> Having inherited from the Komnenian period a propagandist genre without its awesome propaganda machine, the late Byzantine court orators found increased artistic licence to experiment with oratory and put their craft to new uses.

It is not only internal textual evidence in the form of normative language that points to the advisory function of imperial panegyric; the late Byzantine historians found this aspect of court oratory significant enough for mention. In an autobiographical digression the historian George Akropolites (1217–82) wrote that he had delivered in 1261 a thanksgiving oration, which contained an encomium on the Emperor Michael VIII and at its end urged the emperor-usurper to proclaim his son Andronikos co-emperor.<sup>5</sup> John Kantakouzenos attributed another panegyric of mixed nature to Joseph the Philosopher (died c. 1330), the famous learned monk and compiler of an important encyclopedic work, which — perhaps not accidentally — paid much attention to rhetorical theory and to imperial panegyric in particular.<sup>6</sup> Describing the prehistory of the First Civil War (1321–8) between the Emperors Andronikos II and Andronikos III, Kantakouzenos wrote that the elder emperor had borne a long-standing grudge against his innocent grandson and had forbidden him to travel beyond the environs of Constantinople. Foreseeing the gathering clouds of conflict in 1319, the younger Andronikos selected Joseph as a mediator.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> R. Macrides, 'The New Constantinople and the New Constantinople — 1261?', *BMGS* 4 (1978), 13–41. Holobolos delivered three panegyrics, dating most likely to Christmas 1265, 1266, and 1267.

<sup>4</sup> Lists of patriarchal officials dating to the Palaiologan period mention the Rhetor. See J. Verpeaux, *Pseudo-Kodinos: Traité des Offices* (Paris, 1966), 338. Verpeaux has dated this list to Andronikos III's reign (1328–1341). See also J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ de l'Église Byzantine* (Paris, 1970), 549, 554, 568, 571. Two famous *rhétors* of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth century, Matthew Kamariotes and Manuel of Corinth, attacked the ideas of the philosopher George Gemistos Pletho; cf. C. Woodhouse, *Gemistos Plethon: the last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986), 362–3.

<sup>5</sup> Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg), vol. 1, 188–9.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph was the author of a rhetorical treatise entitled *Synopsis of Rhetoric*, which is the opening part of his encyclopedia, yet unpublished in its entirety. On numerous occasions Joseph gave examples of rhetorical figures from imperial panegyric and quoted in full Menander's chapter on this type of oration. See Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3, 516, 519–21, 524–5, 531, 533, 538, 541, 542, 547–58.

<sup>7</sup> Kantakouzenos (ed. Schopen), vol. 1, 30.

According to the historian, Joseph conducted his mission by delivering an encomium of Andronikos II, in which he also upbraided the emperor for treating his grandson harshly.

A question which naturally arises is how counsel to the emperor, even in the form of criticism, and panegyric co-existed within the body of the same oration. Of considerable interest is the way in which an encomiastic speech of counsel fits into the generic classifications of rhetoric. Hermogenes of Tarsus (second century AD), the principal theoretician of rhetoric of the Byzantines, considered the counselling oration one of the three main categories of oratory, alongside the epideictic and the judicial. This tripartite classification originates from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and was well known to Byzantine commentators on the corpus of Hermogenes.<sup>8</sup> Although speeches of counsel have come down to us, none of them, at least in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, addresses an emperor.<sup>9</sup> If we exclude the genre of the 'Mirrors of Princes', traditionally couched in didactic and moralistic language, the only type of rhetorical work addressing emperors is numerous panegyrics. Byzantine rhetorical theory described these works as purely laudatory. The principal handbook on imperial panegyric was a special chapter in the treatise on epideictic oratory attributed to Menander Rhetor (late third century).<sup>10</sup> The *progymnasmata* of Hermogenes and Aphthonios also contain handy instructions on how to compose an encomium.<sup>11</sup> Finally, specimens of court oratory of an earlier period, which were circulated and copied in late Byzantium, provided authors with cherished models.

<sup>8</sup> Hermogenes, *On Staseis* and *On Ideas*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1913), 34–5, 384. On the later commentators, see *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1931), 33, 67–8.

<sup>9</sup> Nikephoros Choumnos addressed an advisory speech to the people of Thessalonike on the subject of justice: Θεσσαλονικεῦσι συμβουλευτικὸς περὶ δικαιοσύνης, in J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota graeca*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1830), 137–87. In 1366 and c. 1371 Demetrios Kydonēs addressed two speeches of counsel to high officials in Constantinople, at a time when the Emperor John V Palaiologos (1341–91) was travelling in the West. See *Oratio pro subsidio Latinorum* and *Oratio de non reddenda Callipoli*, PG 154: 961–1039. On the date of these speeches, see F. Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydonēs: Briefe* (Stuttgart, 1981), 65.

<sup>10</sup> D. Russell and N. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford, 1981), 76–96. In late Byzantium Menander's chapter is found in Joseph's rhetorical treatise (see above, n. 6), as well as in other rhetorical handbooks and rhetorical collections, such the *Rhetorica Marciana* and the *Rhetor Monacensis*. See V. De Falco, 'Trattato retorico bizantino (Rhetorica Marciana)', *Atti della società ligustica di scienze e lettere* 9 (1930), 71–124 (this rhetorical treatise has been dated to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century); H. Rabe, 'Rhetoren-Corpora', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 67 (1912), 321–57, especially 345–57 (the fourteenth-century Cod. Monac. gr. 505 contains Planoudes' edition of Hermogenes and Aphthonios, in addition to Menander). Cod. Barocchi 131, an important manuscript of the thirteenth century containing miscellaneous rhetorical texts, includes Menander's handbook; see N. Wilson, 'A Byzantine miscellany: ms. Barocchi 131 described', *JÖB* 27 (1978), 158–79, here 168.

<sup>11</sup> *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1926), 21–7. *Hermogenis Opera*, 14–18.

Upon close scrutiny, one can discern three distinct ways in which elements of counsel and political opinion figured in the body of an imperial panegyric. First, rhetoricians of the reign of Andronikos II, a period of unparalleled flowering of late Byzantine court culture, introduced a type of speech which combined deliberative and panegyric discourse, the 'political panegyric'. Second, orators throughout the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries felt free to interject in the body of imperial panegyrics arguments and prescriptions urging immediate action. And third, the orators resorted to a powerful rhetorical device — irony.

*The political panegyric and the circle of Maximos Planoudes*

A genre described by Hermogenes, the political panegyric was the most direct and daring form of advice-giving in the context of an encomium. For Hermogenes, the political panegyric was a genre which combined the characteristics of epideictic discourse, on the one hand, and the counselling and judicial, on the other; in practice this oration bordered on the counselling speech.<sup>12</sup> John Sikeliotes (fl. c. 1000), a commentator on Hermogenes, elaborated on the structure of the political panegyric. According to him, this speech was called 'political', because it presented a matter for debate, but it was also a 'panegyric', because 'its overall structure' was that of an encomium. The political panegyric consisted of two parts, one argumentative and one panegyric, and each had to support the author's position and blunt the force of the opponents' arguments.<sup>13</sup> It is significant that the very same passage from Sikeliotes' scholia figures in the commentaries on the corpus of Hermogenes produced by Maximus Planoudes (c. 1255–before 1305).<sup>14</sup>

A well-known Byzantine philologist and teacher, Planoudes certainly had intellectual interests going beyond the ordinary for his age. His translations of Latin authors — Ovid, Boethius, and St Augustine — are well known.<sup>15</sup> Planoudes was involved in politics, although he did not climb to the summit of the imperial bureaucracy, as did his learned

<sup>12</sup> Hermogenes, *On Ideas*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, 386–7, 388–9. On Hermogenes' treatise *On Ideas*, see G. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1973), 13–19; G. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, 1983), 96–101.

<sup>13</sup> Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 6, 483.14–17: πολιτικός μὲν ὅτι ἀμφισβήτησιν ἔχει πανηγυρικός δέ, ὅτι δι' ἐπαίνων ἐστὶ καὶ ψόγων ἢ ὅλη αὐτοῦ διαρτία· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἑκατέρου τῶν μέρων ἐξαίρειν μὲν τὸ οἰκεῖον, μειοῦν δὲ τὸ τοῦ ἐναντίου. The tenth-century *Suda* lexicon glosses the word διαρτία as meaning διάπλασις, i.e. 'moulding, shaping'.

<sup>14</sup> Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 5, 555.

<sup>15</sup> On Maximos Planoudes as an intellectual and teacher, see C. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204–ca. 1310)* (Nicosia, 1982), 66–89; N. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (2nd ed.; London and Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 230–41; S. Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261–1453)* (Athens, 1996), 34–42; PLP, no. 23308.

contemporaries and imperial prime ministers (*mesazontes*) Nikephoros Choumnos (c. 1250/55–1327) and Theodore Metochites (1270–1332). Planoudes assisted Michael VIII in the preparation of the ill-fated Union of Lyons (1274). After the termination of the Union, Planoudes remained close to Andronikos II, who handpicked him for two important diplomatic missions: the first to Cilician Armenia in 1295,<sup>16</sup> the second to Venice in 1297.<sup>17</sup> Planoudes did not lose the emperor's favour even after his close friend and correspondent, the general Alexios Philanthropenos, rebelled in 1296 and was blinded.<sup>18</sup>

An intellectual giant of his time maintaining close connections to the emperor of the day, Planoudes attempted to introduce genuine political oratory into the Palaiologan court. During the reign of Andronikos II, Planoudes taught rhetoric and produced a new edition of the corpus of Hermogenes, which he furnished with a commentary, largely based on earlier scholia. In the prolegomenon to his edition, Planoudes quoted a score of discordant definitions of rhetoric and remarked that the one put forth by Dionysios of Halikarnassos in his work *On Imitation* was the most appropriate.<sup>19</sup> According to Dionysios of Halikarnassos, rhetoric was the skill of persuasion in 'political matters'.<sup>20</sup> Planoudes indeed dealt with pressing political matters in his imperial panegyric addressed to Andronikos II and his sixteen-year-old son Michael IX Palaiologos.<sup>21</sup> He delivered this oration a few days after the latter's coronation on 21 May 1294, during the days of feasting and rhetorical performances which followed the ceremony. The empire's foreign policies loomed large among

<sup>16</sup> *Maximi Monachi Planudis Epistulae*, ed. M. Treu (Breslau, 1890), no. 114, 159. Planoudes never went on this mission out of fear that his enemies would accuse him of heterodoxy.

<sup>17</sup> Pachymeres, vol. 3, IX.21, pp. 269–71; F. Dölger and P. Wirth, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, vol. 3: *Regesten von 1204–1282* (Munich, 1977), no. 2197. The purpose of the embassy was to arrange a new commercial treaty with Venice after the ten-year pact signed in 1285 had expired. The embassy took place in particularly difficult circumstances. In 1296 the Venetians had made a naval assault on the Genoese in Pera, and the Genoese had taken revenge by murdering Venetians resident in Constantinople and looting their properties.

<sup>18</sup> A. Laiou, 'Some observations on Alexios Philanthropenos and Maximos Planoudes', *BMGS* 4 (1978), 89–99.

<sup>19</sup> *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, 65.

<sup>20</sup> Dionysios of Halikarnassos' definition of rhetoric is found in his work *On Imitation*. Numerous Byzantine prolegomena to the rhetorical corpus of Hermogenes make mention of it. See *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, 30, 106, 199, 283–4, 346, 349.

<sup>21</sup> The speech has been published on the basis of Mosc. Gr. 315 (16th cent.) by L. Westerink, 'Le basilikos de Maxime Planude', *BSI* 27 (1966), 98–103; 28 (1967), 54–67; 29 (1968), 34–50 (hereafter Planoudes, 'Basilikos'). For additional and better readings from Ambr. Gr. 14 sup. (13th cent.), see S. Kourouses, 'Νέος κώδιξ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ Μαξίμου τοῦ Πλανούδη', *Athina* 73–4 (1972–3), 426–34. On the date of the coronation, see A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: the foreign policy of Andronicus II, 1282–1328* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 50 and n. 7.

the issues which Planoudes put forth for discussion. In particular, the orator touched upon a hot political subject: the Byzantine fleet which about ten years earlier Andronikos II had ordered to be fully dismantled. This was a short-sighted and baneful decision. Writing after Planoudes, the historians George Pachymeres and Nikephoros Gregoras both blamed Byzantium's military decline on its lack of naval forces.<sup>22</sup> Pachymeres also informs us of popular indignation in 1305 and 1306, the years of the Catalan fiasco, among the populace of Constantinople at the dismantling of the fleet.<sup>23</sup> The speech of Planoudes shows that the disbanding of the fleet came under sharp criticism earlier than is usually thought.

The double structure of Planoudes' speech betrays what he took from the description of the political panegyric by Hermogenes and his later commentators. The work opens with a lengthy encomium couched in full-blown epideictic prose and containing a praise of the emperor's native land and family, his birth and his upbringing, his physical and inner virtues.<sup>24</sup> Interjected comments and narrative choices in the panegyric part of the oration anticipate the second, openly advisory part of the speech. This device fully corresponds to Sikeliotes' and Planoudes' observation that the encomiastic part of a political panegyric should support the arguments raised in its deliberative part. Thus, we find a normative opinion tucked within the panegyric discourse, stating that the emperor's 'mildness' and 'goodness' should not make him meek and humble.<sup>25</sup> We also find a wish expressed through an optative form; when Planoudes praised the superb warrior abilities of Michael IX, he wished that the enemies would soon feel them at their back.<sup>26</sup> Playing on the multiple meanings of the Greek word *genos*, Planoudes pointed to the Romans as the emperor's real family and described them as a warlike people, who were not traders like the Phoenicians and not simple farmers like the Egyptians.<sup>27</sup> In particular, Planoudes praised Michael IX's grandfather Michael VIII for having taken superb care of the Byzantine fleet in the recent past. The orator marvelled how in his reign the straits of the Bosphoros had been too narrow to contain the large Byzantine navy. The Aegean and the Black Seas had also teemed with ships of the imperial fleet. Like another Herakles, Michael VIII had virtually walked on water and had rid the sea of pirates and local Latin

<sup>22</sup> Pachymeres, vol. 3, VII.26, pp. 81–3. Gregoras (ed. Schopen), vol. 1, 174–5. Cf. H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer* (Paris, 1966), 374–8.

<sup>23</sup> At that time Andronikos II tried to rebuild some of his navy. See Pachymeres, vol. 4, XII.26, pp. 581.3–7, 595.14–15. Cf. A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 165.

<sup>24</sup> He opened the speech by praising Michael IX's body and character. Then he focused on Michael IX's illustrious family and his native city of Constantinople. An extensive panegyric of his grandfather, Michael VIII, and his father, Andronikos II, follows afterwards.

<sup>25</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 59.372–5.

<sup>26</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 61.468–71.

<sup>27</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 62.529–38.

lords.<sup>28</sup> All this corresponds to the historical reality of the recent past, as Michael VIII had reconquered a number of Aegean islands from their Western lords.<sup>29</sup>

The panegyric set the stage for the openly advisory part of the speech. Planoudes gave two direct pieces of advice: the emperor should always suspect the motives of his enemies when conducting diplomatic negotiations and should prepare himself physically for war.<sup>30</sup> The main part of the counsel was presented as a vivid polemic with an unnamed opponent. The way Planoudes constructed this polemic was borrowed straight from the treatise *On Invention*, a part of the rhetorical corpus of Hermogenes. He first introduced a topic for argument (*kephalaion*) and then presented counter-arguments (*hypophorai*) put forth by an opponent, who would get up and raise an objection.<sup>31</sup> For Hermogenes, the model for this combative rhetoric was Demosthenes.<sup>32</sup> Planoudes' proposition was that the emperor should possess a sizeable army including even peasants and shepherds, a large native and mercenary cavalry force, a powerful fleet, and a great military budget.<sup>33</sup> The orator appended to this proposition a number of practical counsels: the emperor should take good care of the battle horses and not abuse them as draft animals; he should not let merchants export weapons and should keep the ships securely docked.<sup>34</sup>

The opponent retorted with two counter-arguments. Planoudes presents the first as a parody of a real argument, remarking that 'even if the emperor does not say anything now, every one knows with whom he would agree'.<sup>35</sup> According to Planoudes, his adversaries would argue that an imperial cavalry is unnecessary, for horse riders cannot touch the ground with their feet. They would also deem warrior clothes to be too rough and uncomfortable for them, and would prefer to leave the ships to rot at the docks, since there were no longer Argonauts and a golden fleece.<sup>36</sup> Among the preposterous ideas attributed to his opponents, Planoudes referred to a very real event. The historian Gregoras wrote that after the disbanding of the fleet, some of the ships were left to decay for

<sup>28</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 65.670–66.687.

<sup>29</sup> Michael VIII retook all the Cycladic islands but Naxos, as well as the island of Lemnos. See D. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282: a study in Byzantine–Latin relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 295–300.

<sup>30</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 44.1228–9.

<sup>31</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 44.1262: φέρε γὰρ κάκεινο σκεψώμεθα; 45.1288–1289: ἕτερος δ' ἀναστὰς φήσει μὴ οὕτως ὀφείλειν ταῦτ' εἶναι καὶ γίνεσθαι; 46.1313: ἐτέρωθεν δ' ἀναστὰς ἕτερος πάλιν ἀντέκρουσεν. For its use in a late Byzantine counselling speech (not addressed to any emperor), see Demetrios Kydones, *Oratio pro subsidio Latinorum*, PG 154: 972A.

<sup>32</sup> *Hermogenis Opera*, 132–6.

<sup>33</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 44.1262–45.1270.

<sup>34</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 45.1275–86.

<sup>35</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 45.1302–3.

<sup>36</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 45.1287–98.

years in the Golden Horn. Thus it appears that Planoudes not only counselled and entertained his audience with a satire, but criticized the emperor in a work which also heaped excessive praise on him.<sup>37</sup> The second counter-argument which Planoudes assigned to his opponents was panegyric and based on a comparison between the emperor and the peace-loving King David.<sup>38</sup> Here Planoudes proceeded to a forceful resolution of the debate (called by Hermogenes *to biaion*), namely he used his opponent's argument to his own advantage.<sup>39</sup> He remarked that King David had been both a peaceful shepherd and a fierce warrior. In addition, for Planoudes, diplomacy could not bring a lasting peace, for the barbarians were always untrustworthy and not easily bound by agreements.<sup>40</sup>

There is no doubt that Planoudes alluded to real and dramatic historical events. One of them was the destruction of the fleet. Another was the failure of the protracted diplomatic negotiations on the marriage of Michael IX to the titular empress of Constantinople, Catherine of Courtenay, which had been on the agenda for six years.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the enemies to whom Planoudes referred were the Latins. A fleet was particularly necessary in a naval war against hostile Western powers which were still planning an assault on Byzantium. In addition, it is probable that the orator advocated a more offensive policy against the Turks. The victorious push into Asia Minor of the general Alexios Philanthropenos, which began in 1294, must have instilled in Planoudes at least some of the militaristic spirit which he conveyed to his audience. Planoudes was in correspondence with Philanthropenos at that time and visited him in Asia Minor in 1295. His advocacy of greater spending on the army pertained directly to the last significant offensive operation of Byzantium in Asia Minor.

Who were Planoudes' unnamed opponents? A possible clue as to their identity is a jibe directed at earlier panegyrists of Andronikos II, in particular the prime minister (*mesazon*), Nikephoros Choumnos. Planoudes emphasized that his oration was of an innovative nature. After praising at length Andronikos II, Planoudes apologized for repeating imperial virtues

<sup>37</sup> Gregoras, vol. 1, 176.

<sup>38</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 46.1314-24.

<sup>39</sup> On this rhetorical device, see Hermogenes, *On Invention*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, 138-40.

<sup>40</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 46.1340-57.

<sup>41</sup> Andronikos II initiated negotiations for this marriage alliance in 1288. Ambassadors from the king of Naples Charles II (1285-1309), at whose court Catherine of Courtenay resided, are known to have been present at Michael IX's coronation. See Pachymeres, vol. 3, IX.1, p. 219. It is possible that Planoudes took part in the capacity of an interpreter in the negotiations at that time. Two years later, in 1296, Michael IX married an Armenian princess. Cf. A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 48-56.

which everyone knew all too well.<sup>42</sup> Planoudes took issue in particular with Choumnos and his younger contemporary, Metochites, who both had presented the emperor's philanthropic actions as a transgression of the law, although an admirable transgression of a special kind — 'the best form of lawlessness' that there can be.<sup>43</sup> Planoudes disagreed with previous rhetorical interpretations. 'I am annoyed', he retorted, 'hearing that some people dispute whether philanthropy and justice could be regarded as one and the same thing'.<sup>44</sup> The orator noted that philanthropy never contradicted justice, but the two virtues formed an indivisible whole. This seemingly innocuous remark must have had a deeper meaning. Planoudes delivered his panegyric a few months after Nikephoros Choumnos had been appointed to the office of *mesazon*. Therefore Planoudes did not simply dismiss one of the many imperial orations, but attacked a cherished rhetorical work authored by the right-hand man of the emperor.<sup>45</sup> The more perceptive members of the audience would doubtless have understood this personal riposte and would have associated Choumnos with Planoudes' anonymous opponent.

A political panegyric with a similar bipartite structure — an encomium to which a deliberative and polemical discourse is appended — is found in Vat. Gr. 112. The author of this intriguing piece may have been the young George Galesiotes (the future *protekdikos* and *sakellion* of the patriarchate) or, what is more likely, the Rhetor Manuel Holobolos.<sup>46</sup> This panegyric

<sup>42</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 40.1056–7.

<sup>43</sup> Nikephoros Choumnos, in J.F. Boissonade, *Anecdota graeca*, vol. 2, 44–5; Theodore Metochites, Βασιλικὸς πρῶτος, Cod. Vind. Philol. Gr. 95, f. 96r. The idea goes back to the first oration of Themistius entitled 'On Philanthropy or Constantius', Or. 1, 15a–b. Verpeaux has dated Choumnos' speech to about 1284–5. See J. Verpeaux, *Nicéphore Choumnos, homme d'état et humaniste byzantin* (Paris, 1959), 35, n. 4. The first imperial oration to Metochites dates to about 1290. The same idea on imperial philanthropy also figures in the imperial oration by Nicholas Lampenos delivered between 1296 and 1303. See I. Polemis, *Ὁ λόγιος Νικόλαος Λαμπηνός καὶ τὸ ἐγκώμιον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον Β' Παλαιολόγον* (Athens, 1992), 53.

<sup>44</sup> Planoudes, 'Basilikos', 37.911–13: ἠνώχλημαι τὴν ἀκοὴν πολλάκις, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τινῶν ἀκούων, ἀμφισβητούντων δικαιοσύνης ἔνεκεν καὶ φιλανθρωπίας, εἴ γε κατὰ ταῦτόν αὐταὶ θεωρηθῆναι που δυνήσονται.

<sup>45</sup> According to Pachymeres, Choumnos became *mesazon* at the death of his predecessor Theodore Mouzalon in early 1294. See Pachymeres, vol. 3, VIII.31, pp. 215.17–20. Cf. *PLP*, nos. 19439 (Theodore Mouzalon) and 30961 (Nikephoros Choumnos). One year later in 1295, Choumnos also became the head of the imperial chancery (*ho epi tou kanikleiou*). That Planoudes engaged in a rhetorical and political polemic with Choumnos, did not prevent him from praising the rhetorical craft of the highest minister of the empire in a subsequent private letter. In 1299 Planoudes lauded Choumnos as a talented rhetorician (*dexios rhetor*) and recommended a certain uncle of his for an unspecified favour. See Treu, *Epistulae*, no. 6, 13–14, 202.

<sup>46</sup> Only the opening part of the surviving portion of the encomium has been published by S. Kourouses, 'Ἡ πρώτη ἡλικία καὶ ἡ πρώτη σταδιοδρομία τοῦ πρωτεκδίκου καὶ σακελλίου τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας Γεωργίου Γαλησιώτου (1278/80–1357/;)', *Athena* 75 (1973–4), 364–6 (hereafter Kourouses, 'Galesiotes'). Compare the mocking description of the last Latin



dates to shortly after the conclusion in 1299 of the important marriage alliance between Andronikos II and the Serbian King Stefan Uros II Milutin (1282-1321). Unlike Planoudes however, the unknown author took the emperor's side and conducted a polemic with the opponents of the marriage. The Byzantine-Serbian alliance was a public relations fiasco for Andronikos II. His daughter Simonis was barely five years old, while her husband, the Serbian king, was in his forties and thrice divorced. The scandalous and uncanonical marriage provoked the vigorous protests of the Patriarch John XII Kosmas (1294-1303), who withdrew from public life for nearly two years. Yet the marriage alliance was a clever political move, for it put an end to nearly two decades of Serbian assault on Byzantium.

The surviving fragment of the imperial oration opens by citing the views of the opponents of the alliance. The author identified them as 'generals, men of power, and all the foreign peoples'.<sup>47</sup> For them, an alliance with the Serbs was an ill-conceived and unprincipled decision, for it blurred the distinction between old friends and traditional enemies. The orator's response (the *anthypophora*) presented various arguments. Some are highly panegyric in nature.<sup>48</sup> The orator explained the emperor's decision to conclude this unexpected alliance as a clear sign of his divinity (for no human ever forgets evils caused by a staunch enemy) and a result of his innate benevolence and philanthropy.<sup>49</sup> The orator, however, also made a number of logical arguments, which were based on the current political realities. The alliance was said to benefit both Byzantium and the Serbs, since without it neither people would have remained safe and lived without fear.<sup>50</sup> The orator mentioned that hostile foreign powers, such as the Latins and the Bulgarians, endangered both the Byzantines and the Serbs before the conclusion of the alliance.<sup>51</sup> Then the author referred to Byzantium's own difficulties with containing Serbian aggression. The maintenance of fortifications in border areas had proven to be no barrier to

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emperor of Constantinople Baldwin II (1240-1261) in M. Treu, *Manuelis Holoboli Orationes* (Potsdam, 1906/1907), 68.14-19, with Vat. Gr. 112, f. 35 r: ἡ γελοῖον ἂν εἶη δραπέτον καὶ μαστιγίον [μαστιγία cod.] μοῖραν ὄντινον κεκληρωμένον καὶ μηδὲν πλέον εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν ἐφοδιασθέντα, ἔπειτα νομίζειν ὁσίως πάντων ἐξῆς ἡγεῖσθαι μηδαμῶς τῇ προσηγορίᾳ αἰσχυρόμενον.

<sup>47</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 364.13-22. It is difficult to determine whether these opponents were real or fictitious. In any case, the commander of Andronikos II in the Balkans who oversaw the Byzantine defences against the Serbs, Michael Tarchaneiotēs Glabas, was among the keenest proponents of the marriage alliance. See Pachymeres, vol. 3, IX.30, pp. 299-301. The *mesazon* Nikephoros Choumnos and Theodore Metochites also favoured the marriage. Metochites went on an embassy to the Serbian court to arrange the marriage, and Choumnos was the most probable addressee of his account of the embassy.

<sup>48</sup> See Hermogenes, *On Invention*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, 162-4, for the important distinction between logical ('apodeictic') and panegyric arguments.

<sup>49</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 364.9-25.

<sup>50</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 365.45-7.

<sup>51</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 365.39-44.

the Serbs, but only a useless public expense.<sup>52</sup> The current cessation of hostilities and depredations of Byzantine territories was the ultimate proof of the marriage's necessity.<sup>53</sup>

As in the case of Planoudes' oration, the deliberative part of the speech found support in the purely panegyric, which here follows the deliberation and is a conventional praise of the four cardinal virtues. Still, rhetorical comparisons were well chosen to justify Simonis' marriage to the Serbian king. The orator underscored that Andronikos II differed from Romulus, who never gave his daughters in marriage but instead abducted the Sabinian women.<sup>54</sup> The emperor resembled Alexander the Great who had arranged the marriage of his generals to Persian noblewomen, yet those marriages never brought much benefit to Alexander and eventually the drunken king of ancient Macedon assassinated some of his warrior companions.<sup>55</sup>

*Arguments, opinions, or warnings*

The 'political panegyric' never took firm hold at the Byzantine court after the 1290s. Rather, late Byzantine rhetoricians preferred subtler ways of advocating political causes. Similar to the political panegyric was a type of imperial oration in which the author developed an argument in support of a decision on the immediate agenda of the emperor. An example of such an argumentative work is the second imperial panegyric of Theodore Metochites addressed to Andronikos II during the emperor's three-year-long sojourn in Asia Minor (1290-3). Metochites delivered this speech in the city of Nicaea, where the emperor with his entire entourage had taken temporary residence after a wintertime inspection of the Turkish-Byzantine frontier along the river Sangarius.<sup>56</sup> Metochites, who was in his early twenties, had already become a member of Andronikos II's close circle and held the honorary title of Logothete of the Herds (*logothetes ton agelon*). In the imperial oration he related at length the story of the military enterprises of Andronikos II in Asia Minor, those in the past and the present one which had begun in 1290. The young Metochites commented in particular on a subject in which he was to become an expert

<sup>52</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 366.74-5.

<sup>53</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 366.93-9.

<sup>54</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 366.84-5.

<sup>55</sup> Kourouses, 'Galesiotes', 366.86-92.

<sup>56</sup> This speech is still unpublished in Cod. Vindob. Philol. Gr. 95, ff. 145v-158r. Cf. I. Ševčenko, *Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos* (Brussels, 1962), 138-40.

and make a good name for himself in the coming years as he climbed ever higher up the ladder of the civil service: imperial diplomacy.<sup>57</sup>

Metochites warned his audience against any diplomatic dealings with the Turks and referred specifically to those Turkish tribes who lived beyond the lower Sangarius river in Byzantine Paphlagonia, or Turkish Kastamonu. The orator presented an account of the fluid society of the Turks, describing them as a nomadic people with no laws and no polity, living in mountains and ravines. They lacked any stable authority after their centralized state, the Sultanate of Konya, had fallen apart.<sup>58</sup> Then Metochites proceeded to make an argument by antithesis: had the Byzantines been dealing with a single and centralized polity, diplomacy could lead to a permanent solution of the problem. However, since Turkish society consisted of too many small political entities (i.e. the nascent Turkish emirates), diplomatic interaction with them was of no avail.<sup>59</sup> Metochites thus articulated the cornerstone of Byzantine diplomacy toward Turkish Asia Minor in the reigns of Michael VIII and Andronikos II, namely that the Mongols of Persia and the Golden Horde, but not the Turkish emirs, were Byzantium's strategic allies. It is also highly probable that Metochites had in mind contemporary events taking place on the eastern side of the Sangarios river, where Byzantium's border with the Turks ran at the time. In the years 1291 and 1292, political turmoil in Turkish Paphlagonia had created the prospect of Byzantium's alliance with a local ruler, a certain Mansur. Mansur, as Elizabeth Zachariadou has established, was a son of the former Seljuk sultan Izzeddin II Keykavus (1246–57), a one-time Byzantine ally who had been a political refugee at the court of Michael VIII. A brother of Mansur, Melik Constantine, still resided in Constantinople during the 1290s. Pachymeres and Gregoras inform us that Mansur traveled to Constantinople in 1292 to propose the alliance, but was dissuaded and left for Paphlagonia where he was killed. Metochites' oration presents a sensible contemporary argument made against this alliance.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> We know that in the spring of 1294 Metochites took part in an embassy to Cilician Armenia. See Pachymeres, vol. 3, IX.5, p. 231; F. Dölger and P. Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 2156b. By 1299, Metochites had visited the Serbian court on five different occasions. Cf. I. Ševčenko, 'Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the intellectual trends of his time', in P. Underwood, ed., *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 4, (New York, 1975), 26–7.

<sup>58</sup> Cod. Vindob. Philol. Gr. 95, f. 154v.

<sup>59</sup> Cod. Vindob. Philol. Gr. 95, ff. 154v–155r: Εἴτα τί τις αὐτοῖς χρήσαιτο πρὸς μὲν γὰρ συμβάσεις καὶ ὁμολογίας; τοῦτό ἐστιν ὄντως ἐκεῖθεν Εὐρυβάτου πράγματα ... Κἂν μὲν τε πρὸς ἐστῶσαν ἦν ἡγεμονίαν ἢ σπουδὴ καὶ ἡρμοσμένην ἐνὶ γε τῷ δήπου τρόπῳ, οὐδὲν ἂν ἦν πρᾶγμα τέλος εὐρέσθαι. On arguments by antithesis, see Hermogenes, *On Invention*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, 173–5.

<sup>60</sup> The episode of the visit of Mansur to Constantinople has been described by Pachymeres, vol. 4, X.25, pp. 359–61; Gregoras, vol. 1, 137–8. On the presence in Constantinople of his brother Melik Constantine, who was a Christian convert, see Pachymeres, vol. 4,

Furthermore, Metochites used normative language to voice his views on the disastrous situation in Asia Minor which at the time was under constant Turkish assault. After describing at length Andronikos II's campaigns in the East during the reign of his father Michael VIII in the period 1280–82, a time when the empire had divided its resources in order to be able to fight on two fronts (in the Balkans and in Asia Minor), Metochites interjected a prescriptive statement. He noted that a division of the empire's military resources would currently be detrimental to Byzantium. Accordingly, Metochites urged the emperor to concentrate his entire attention on Asia Minor and to leave one part of the empire (apparently the West) to 'follow its fate'.<sup>61</sup> The alternative was no less than the fall of Byzantium. Metochites did not back up this opinion with any logical argumentation, but instead indulged in a moving rhetorical comparison. He likened the current situation in the empire to a house, a part of which was burning, while its inhabitants paid attention to a small flicker elsewhere instead of dealing with the raging conflagration, and thus allowed the entire house to be destroyed. The idea of concentrating all the empire's resources in the East and ignoring the Balkans was clearly an individual view of Metochites, which ran against the official policies at the time. During his sojourn in Asia Minor Andronikos II did not leave the European part of Byzantium to its own devices. In 1292 Michael Tarchaneiotes Glabas, Andronikos II's general in the Balkans, conducted a major military campaign in Epiros with a significant number of troops: 44,000 according to the exaggerated estimate of the *Chronicle of the Morea*. This expedition was memorable enough for a later encomiast of Andronikos II, Nicholas Lampenos (writing between 1296 and 1303), to remember the emperor's stay in Bithynia and the fortification of its frontier as having taken place at a time of great military successes in Epiros and Dalmatia.<sup>62</sup> Metochites, a contemporary of the events, mentioned no campaigns in the Balkans and favoured the transfer of all military resources from the West to the East, so that Byzantium could better face the critical situation in Asia Minor.

XIII.22, pp. 673–5. Cf. E. Zachariadou, 'Pachymeres on the "Amourioi" of Kastamonu', *BMGS* 3 (1977), 57–70.

<sup>61</sup> Cod. Vindob. Philol. Gr. 95, f. 151r: ἤδη νῦν ἔρρει Ῥωμαίοις τὰ πράγματα, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντισχεῖν ἐφ' ἑκάτερα, ἀλλ' ἢ ἀμφοτέρω μερισθέντας ἀμφοτέρω διολέσθαι, ὥς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀποχρώντως εἶναι, ἢ πάντως ἀνάγκη θάτερον ἀνεκτῶς καταπροέσθαι πρὸς τὴν τύχην καὶ τὸν χαλεπὸν συνδυασμὸν ἱκανομένους.

<sup>62</sup> The Byzantine soldiers besieged the city of Ioannina, but were forced to withdraw. See *The Chronicle of the Morea*, ed. J. Schmitt (London, 1904), 352–68, ll. 8782–9235; Nicholas Lampenos, in I. Polemis, *Ὁ λόγιος Νικόλαος Λαμπηνός*, 50–51. Cf. A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*, 40 and n. 28; D. Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479: a contribution to the history of Greece in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1984), 37–42.

A less intrusive form of counselling the emperor was the wish that he carry out a concrete policy. The rhetorical handbook of Menander Rhetor recommended wishes or prayers as appropriate endings of the imperial panegyric. These wishes were to concern trivia, such as his majesty's good health, a long reign, and the smooth succession of his son to the throne. A wish concerning a concrete imperial policy was quite a different matter. An example of such a wish figures in the panegyric by Jacob of Bulgaria, the ex-Archbishop of Ohrid. Jacob delivered the oration in the winter of 1252–3, at a time when the Nicaean emperor John III Vatatzes (1222–54) had arrived in the Balkans on a campaign against the autonomous ruler of Epiros Michael II (c. 1231–67).<sup>63</sup> Jacob called his speech a victory address.<sup>64</sup> Yet, apart from a vague insult aimed at an unnamed illegitimate ruler, he did not refer at all to the Nicaean–Epirote conflict.<sup>65</sup> The reason for this conspicuous silence may lie in the fact that Jacob had been archbishop of Ohrid at the time when his metropolis was under the control of Michael II of Epiros.<sup>66</sup> In fact, Jacob disliked the military conflict between Nicaea and Epiros. He outlined the great victories of Vatatzes against the Latins, pointed to the current peace with them, predicted that it would not last for long, and wished for the emperor to liberate the author's native Peloponnese and central Greece from the Franks.<sup>67</sup> The orator thus tried to point to the emperor a different direction for his campaign.

Another way imperial panegyrists voiced their opinions about important political matters was by issuing a warning. The imperial oration of Theodore II Laskaris on his father John III Vatatzes is a case in point. Speaking at a banquet sometime between 1250 and 1254, Theodore Laskaris inserted in the praise of his father's munificence a gloomy warning. He voiced his fear lest people 'accustomed to profit from imperial generosity' lose their senses and decide one day to kill the emperor and his

<sup>63</sup> On the date of the oration, see I. Dujcev, *Prinosi kum srednovekovnata bulgarska istoriia* (*Contributions à l'histoire bulgare du moyen âge*) (Sofia, 1940), 15.

<sup>64</sup> Jacob of Bulgaria, in S. Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina*, vol. 1 (Bari, 1970), 88.15–18.

<sup>65</sup> Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina*, 91.16–19, where Jacob ridiculed a certain 'ruler for one day' (*hemerarches*), doubtless Michael II of Epiros.

<sup>66</sup> Jacob of Bulgaria became the Archbishop of Ohrid in about 1241; by 1250 he had resigned from his office and may have become a monk on Mount Athos. See I. Dujcev, 'Die letzten Jahren des Erzbischofs Jakobos von Achrida', *BZ* 42, 2 (1943/9), 377–83; *idem*, 'Un nouveau temoignage de Jacques de Bulgarie', *BSI* 21 (1960), 54–61. Akropolites informs us that in 1246 Ohrid was already under the control of Michael II of Epiros, and it continued to be so until 1253, when John III Vatatzes incorporated it into Nicaea. See Akropolites, vol. 1, 84, 92. It was during the campaign which led to the reconquest of Ohrid that Jacob pronounced his speech.

<sup>67</sup> Jacob of Bulgaria, in Mercati, *Collectanea Byzantina*, 86.12–15: ναὶ καὶ ζῶν ἔτι κατίδοιμι τὴν ἐμὴν Ἀχαΐαν καὶ τὴν πρόσχωρον Ἑλληνίδα λελυμένην τῶν ἀλαστόρων, καὶ τὴν ὑπὸ Τιτάνων ἀφαντομένην ἀκούσαιμι κροτοῦσαν χεῖρας καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ ῥύσια παιανίζουσιν. See also the immediately preceding passage, referring to the temporary armistice with the Latins which the orator said that the emperor would break soon.

son — i.e. the orator himself.<sup>68</sup> This remark is quite puzzling, as Theodore II did not explain to what individuals and events he was referring. Yet his audience knew well. John III Vatatzes faced increasing problems with the aristocracy in the later part of his reign, when he confiscated some of their land-holdings.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, Theodore II may have had a personal enemy in mind. In a private letter to his friend and tutor George Akropolites before his accession to the throne (1254), the Nicaean prince accused the governor of Thessalonike, Theodore Philes, of having murdered a friend of his (a certain Tribides). Theodore II vowed to report Philes to his father and to take revenge on him.<sup>70</sup> And after Theodore II acceded to the throne 1254, he convicted Philes for *lèse majesté* and punished him with blinding.<sup>71</sup> In the imperial panegyric, Theodore II may have alluded to the very same murderous Philes; however, he pronounced the warning publicly and turned it into a general admonition against the entire social group benefiting from imperial privilege. Historical hindsight shows that Theodore II's warning anticipated and prophesied the violent downfall of the Laskarids in the aristocratic coup led by Michael Palaiologos.

A very similar warning figures in Demetrios Kydones' encomium on John VI Kantakouzenos (1341–54). Speaking shortly after Kantakouzenos gained the upper hand in the Second Civil War (1341–7) and entered Constantinople on 3 February 1347, Kydones warned the emperor that the beneficiaries of his mercy — the supporters of the rival emperor John V Palaiologos (1341–1391) — would not remain loyal to him for long. Kydones wrote that future generations would assign much blame to Kantakouzenos for his leniency and excessive philanthropy.<sup>72</sup> Five years later, in a personal letter Kydones reproached Kantakouzenos for his clemency to his political foes. The difference between the imperial oration and the letter lies only in the public delivery of the former, which lent the warning more weight.<sup>73</sup> As in the case with the speech by Theodore II Laskaris, the turn of events would make this warning a fulfilled prophecy.

<sup>68</sup> L. Tartaglia, *Teodoro II Duca Lascari: Encomio dell'imperatore Giovanni Duca* (Naples, 1990), 67.551–5. The speech is published again in L. Tartaglia, *Opuscula rhetorica: Theodorus II Ducas Lascaris* (Munich, 2000), 50.625–9.

<sup>69</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 105.

<sup>70</sup> N. Festa, *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae CCXVII* (Florence, 1898), no. 78, 105–106. In addition, Philes and Theodore II accused each other of amorous escapades, the details of which are unclear. See Theodore II's satirical description of Philes in another letter of his to Akropolites: *Epistulae CCXVII*, no. 77, 103–4.

<sup>71</sup> Akropolites, vol. 1, 155.

<sup>72</sup> G. Cammelli, 'Demetrii Cydonii orationes tres, adhuc ineditae', *BNJ* 3 (1922), 82.85–9. On the date of this speech, see F. Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydones: Briefe*, 64.

<sup>73</sup> R.-J. Loenertz, *Démétrius Cydonius: Correspondance* (Vatican City, 1956), 40–41. Loenertz dated the letter to 1352, as also did Tinnefeld; see F. Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydones: Briefe*, 223.

In 1354 John V rebelled, entered Constantinople, and forced John Kantakouzenos to resign from the imperial office.

### *Irony*

Another rhetorical device which enabled skillful orators to transmit important messages to their audiences appears to have been the praise of a characteristic which the ruler conspicuously lacked. Modern scholars, such as Hans-Georg Beck, George Kennedy, and Paul Magdalino, have recognized that this rhetorical device, which we may call irony, was a powerful tool in the hands of artful court orators.<sup>74</sup> Yet, as it has also been recognized, it is exceedingly difficult to judge when this level of meaning is intended. How are we, for example, to interpret Holobolos' laudatory comment that Michael VIII was slow in punishing his adversaries and truly stoic in suppressing his anger, when the mere sight of the rhetorician with his mutilated lips and nose — a result of his one-time sympathy with the cause of the blinded child-emperor John IV Laskaris — disproved his words?<sup>75</sup>

Contemporary Byzantine reaction to this rhetorical device should be the appropriate background for any discussion of the use of irony in imperial panegyric. Each suspected case of irony needs to be judged on its own merit from what is known about the author and the context. Hermogenes recommended the use of irony for a style he called 'sternness' (*barytes*).<sup>76</sup> Byzantine rhetorical handbooks throughout the centuries described irony and its categorization.<sup>77</sup> Late Byzantine authors were acutely aware of irony as a rhetorical device. The historian Pachymeres wrote that rhetoricians were often being ironic when they complained that the greatness of their subjects overwhelmed them.<sup>78</sup> In his *Miscellaneous Essays* Metochites remarked that irony characterized the discourse of wise people, and that philosophers often used irony.<sup>79</sup> In the context of an imperial

<sup>74</sup> See H.-G. Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend* (Munich, 1978), 83; Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors*, 25; Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 416–17.

<sup>75</sup> Treu, *Manuelis Holoboli Orationes*, 37.36–38.3.

<sup>76</sup> Hermogenes, *On Ideas*, in *Hermogenis Opera*, 364–7.

<sup>77</sup> See the rhetorical treatises *Peri tropon* by various authors, including Gregory of Corinth (12th cent.), in Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 8, 724, 757–8, 773, 788–9, 817.

<sup>78</sup> Pachymeres, vol. 4, XII.1, pp. 503.1–10.

<sup>79</sup> G. Müller and T. Kiessling, *Miscellanea philosophica et historica* (Leipzig, 1821), ch. 8, 63–7. This chapter of the *Miscellaneous Essays* has been translated into English; see *Theodoros Metochites on Philosophic Irony and Greek History: Miscellanea 8 and 93*, eds. and trans. P. Agapitos, K. Hult, and O. Smith (Nicosia/Göteborg, 1996), 28–33, esp. 28–9. Writing in the 1320s when he was at the height of his power, Metochites wrote that 'most philosophers in ancient times and nowadays are witty and frequently use irony towards those with whom they converse, and I do not know of anyone who does not'. Further, Metochites distinguished between two types of irony: biting and light-hearted.

oration, the possibility of using irony had been recognized by the second-century author Dio Chrysostom, who addressed four imperial orations to the Roman emperor Trajan (98–117). Dio noted that the praise of a virtue which the emperor lacked could be annoying, as it reminded him of a weakness, and could leave the impression that the rhetorician was engaged in mockery.<sup>80</sup> A remarkable late Byzantine reaction to irony by an emperor himself can be found in the history of John Kantakouzenos. Kantakouzenos remembered that during the First Civil War (1321–28) he had distrusted a military report given to him, not knowing whether it was a true or an ironic one (κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἢ κατ' εἰρωνείαν).<sup>81</sup>

While the late Byzantine courtly audience was well acquainted with irony, we must always be aware of the fact that the imperial orations were by their very nature works of propaganda. Thus Holobolos delivered the three most solemn imperial orations of the period in the context of imperial ceremonies. Therefore it is unlikely that he was being ironic, although his audience could have easily interpreted his words as irony. The imperial oration of Gregory of Cyprus on Andronikos II Palaiologos offers us the best candidate for an ironic aside. This panegyric, dating to early 1283, is the only one of Andronikos' reign which praises the emperor for having put an end to the corrupt practice of tax-farming.<sup>82</sup> However, in a private letter to Andronikos II written in 1285, Gregory of Cyprus, now patriarch of Constantinople (1283–9), harshly criticized tax-farming. Here Gregory urged the emperor to check the greed of tax farmers who despoiled the common folk of their last penny.<sup>83</sup> In a letter to the *mesazon* Theodore Mouzalon, Gregory of Cyprus also showed interest in the subject of tax-farming, although here he appealed for lenient treatment of a tax farmer who could not meet his obligations to the fisc.<sup>84</sup> In his imperial oration Gregory of Cyprus thus brought to the fore a problem of administration with which he was deeply concerned and which never came to a satisfactory solution. The line separating laudation from prescription was thin in the mind of the orator. In all likelihood, this was so also for his audience.

<sup>80</sup> Dio Chrysostom, Or. 3. 21–3.

<sup>81</sup> Kantakouzenos, vol. 1, 147.21–22.

<sup>82</sup> Gregory of Cyprus, PG 142: 412B. For the date of the oration, see A. Failler, 'La restauration et la chute définitive de Tralles', *REB* 42, (1984), 258–9.

<sup>83</sup> The letter has been published by S. Eustratiades, *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 4 (1909), no. 134, 18–19. It dates to January 1285, when Gregory of Cyprus was in Constantinople, while Andronikos II still was in Asia Minor in the aftermath of the church council at Atramyttion which attempted to reconcile the rival church factions of the Arsenites and the Josephites. Cf. V. Laurent, *Les Regestes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*. vol. 1: *Les actes des patriarches*, Fasc. 4: *Les Regestes de 1208 à 1309* (Paris, 1971), no. 1483.

<sup>84</sup> S. Eustratiades, *EPh* 3 (1908), no. 117, 283–4. Cf. V. Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1520.



The history of late Byzantine imperial panegyric presents a mixed picture of the continuity of an old genre which is put to novel uses. The breakdown of the propaganda machine of the Komnenoi in 1204, coupled with the effects of external and internal crises facing the enfeebled empire, created conditions favoring the rise of political oratory. Accordingly, public speakers used the tribune of imperial panegyric to take up the active roles of lobbyists and advisers. This development attests not only to the public awareness of the late Byzantine court literati, but also to the opportunities which epideictic rhetoric gave skilful orators. In its purest form, the one found in the rhetorical handbooks of Menander, Hermogenes, and Aphthonios, an encomium was a laudatory work. The late Byzantine panegyrists doubtless continued to heap praises on their rulers in a genre traditionally geared for propagandist expression. Yet, the corpus of Hermogenes itself helped undermine the encomiastic purpose of these works, as it taught orators the art of argumentation and subtle prescription. Faced with a rich rhetorical theory and a long-standing tradition of Greek oratory going back to Demosthenes, the late Byzantine imperial panegyrists deliberated political action, raised arguments, and voiced opinions on important public issues. For displaying political wisdom in a rhetorical genre which in no way required them to do so, these orators deserve credit.

## Section II

### Public uses of rhetoric



## 5. Court poetry: questions of motifs, structure and function

Wolfram Hörandner

We are fairly well informed about Byzantine ceremonial. We have the *Book of Ceremonies* of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, a rich and very informative source; and we have the treatise of Pseudo-Kodinos, much later and different in character, but equally rich in details.<sup>1</sup> So we have much information at our disposal, and yet many questions remain open. As is well known, the character of the *De cerimoniis* is by and large descriptive, insofar as it reports on distinct events of the past, treating them, in a sense, as models for similar occasions.<sup>2</sup> It is hard to decide to what extent this text really served as a handbook at the court in later periods. The thin manuscript tradition is not in favour of such an assumption (the text has come down to us in only one complete manuscript).<sup>3</sup> Thus the question of how the ceremonies really were conducted has to be asked separately for each period of the history of Byzantium; the *De cerimoniis* can serve as background information, but essentially we must work on the basis of as many and as diverse contemporary sources as possible. Basically we have to do with two types of sources: those describing ceremonies, and those themselves forming part of ceremonies in that they were written to be recited during those ceremonies. It is texts of this latter type which will be the main subject of this paper. Here, too, at every turn we shall be confronted with the

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<sup>1</sup> We refrain from enumerating here the various important steps in research on Byzantine ceremonial, from Ducange via Reiske, Heisenberg, Vogt, Treitinger, Guiland, Verpeaux, Kantorowicz, McCormick and Magdalino-Nelson to Jeffreys. Suffice it to mention that work on the *De cerimoniis* has recently been intensified especially by a team at the Collège de France in Paris. See G. Dagron *et al.*, 'L'organisation et le déroulement des courses d'après le *Livre des cérémonies*', *TM* 13 (2000), 1–200.

<sup>2</sup> M. McCormick, 'Analyzing imperial ceremonies', *JÖB* 35 (1985), 1–20, pointed to a certain ambivalence in the appreciation of ceremonies on the part of Byzantine sources: it happens time and again that in the view of Byzantine authors a certain element of a ceremony is part of an old tradition, although in fact it is an innovation; and on the other hand emperors are sometimes praised for introducing some gesture of great symbolic value which is, as we know from other sources, attested much earlier for similar occasions. I shall return to this point a little later on.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J.M. Featherstone, 'The Leipzig manuscript of *De Cerimoniis*', *BZ* 95 (2002), 457–9.

problem of the manuscript tradition. Many relevant texts have come down in a single manuscript, and we have to keep in mind that obviously much has been lost. So any statement about the non-existence of a certain phenomenon in a given period can only be of relative validity.

Let us cast a glance at the situation of the early centuries. We may duly call George of Pisidia the first Byzantine court poet.<sup>4</sup> His great epic-panegyric poems in praise of the emperor Herakleios were certainly written to be recited in public.<sup>5</sup> But there is nothing from his pen that would resemble in structure and character those hymns of the demes as we know them from later centuries, particularly from the Komnenian period. As I said, we have to be cautious with conclusions; yet we may surmise that under Herakleios imperial ceremonial used means of visual and auditory presentation which were different from those in later periods. This does not refer, however, to literary motifs, *topoi* and rhetorical technique; in this respect the techniques and methodology were already well elaborated in late antiquity and remained unchanged to a considerable extent through the Byzantine centuries.

The *De cerimoniis* gives a similar impression. It contains many references to the role of the singers of the demes at court ceremonies, and it transmits the texts of various acclamations, but not of real hymns. Taking account of all the existing evidence, we may agree with Marc Lauxtermann<sup>6</sup> who stated recently (against Michael Jeffreys) that the political verse at the very beginning was *not* the verse of the demes. However, by the beginning of the tenth century it seems that it had acquired this function, as we may conclude from the poems on the deaths of Leo VI and Constantine VII transmitted in the Skylitzes Matritensis and published a quarter of a century ago by Ihor Ševčenko.<sup>7</sup> These poems were obviously composed and performed in the realm of the court, certainly sung by two alternating choirs. In the case of poem III in Ševčenko's edition one choir probably sang the stanzas of the poem itself, while another sang the stanzas of poem I that were inserted as a kind of *anaklomena*.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Kazhdan deliberately begins his *History* only after George of Pisidia (A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature, 650–850* [Athens, 1999]), whereas Marc Lauxtermann takes this author as starting-point of his *opus magnum* on Byzantine poetry (M. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres: texts and contexts*, 2 vols. [vol. 1 in press]). In my view the shift from late antique to Byzantine poetry properly speaking is marked by the œuvre of Pisides more than by any other text.

<sup>5</sup> A. Pertusi, ed., *Giorgio di Pisidia, Poemi. I. Panegirici epici* (Ettal, 1959). See also the discussion by Mary Whitby elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> M. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm: an essay on the political verse and other Byzantine metres* (Vienna, 1999), especially 92 ff.

<sup>7</sup> I. Ševčenko, 'Poems on the deaths of Leo VI and Constantine VII in the Madrid manuscript of Skylitzes', *DOP* 23–4 (1969–70), 185–228. Further bibliography in Lauxtermann, *Spring*.

This highly elaborate piece of poetical art was obviously not the very first of its kind. The indication *Πρὸς τὸ Ἀρχὼν τοῦ κόσμου* ('To the melody of *Archon tou kosmou*') shows that at least regarding the rhythmical pattern (and probably also the alphabetical acrostich) the poet followed a model which is now lost. The trail leads not so much to the racecourse and popular acclamations, but to the religious sphere. Bruno Lavagnini<sup>8</sup> was the first to point to the very important fact that there is a close relation between the poems on the death of Leo VI and the anacreontics of Sophronios — not in terms of rhythm strictly speaking, but of formal construction and disposition of contents. Thus the poems on the death of Leo VI could mark the shift of a certain strophic pattern from the strictly religious sphere to the realm of imperial ceremonial.

So no direct models for these poems have been preserved. But what about followers? In this direction, too, continuity cannot be realized. There is a rather big gap: nothing comparable has been preserved from the late tenth and the eleventh century, and this cannot be purely a matter of a defective manuscript tradition, given the considerable number of surviving important collections of poems from this period. If poets like John Geometres, Christopher of Mitylene, John Mauropous or Michael Psellos had composed deme hymns, some remnants of this production would have come down to us. The special type of deme hymns so well attested in the twelfth century seems to have been shaped not earlier than the Komnenian period itself. Should the emergence of this type of court poetry be seen in direct relationship with the Komnenian emperors and their strong sense of representation? These deme hymns of the Komnenian period may be inferior to the poems on the death of Leo VI, but it has to be kept in mind that they share some essential elements with them: the use of the political verse, the strophic disposition, alternate singing of two (or more?) choirs, partial use of an alphabetical acrostich and sometimes also the introduction of special formal elements (I am thinking of those wedding poems by Theodore Prodromos and Nikolaos Eirenikos where the first verse or the first couple of verses of a stanza is repeated at its end).<sup>9</sup>

So if there exists continuity in this field, it covers the chronological space from John II's reign, i.e. the first half of the twelfth century, until the end of the thirteenth century, or, to put it in terms of author names, from Theodore Prodromos to Manuel Holobolos. During this period of time some changes concerning the external conditions of performance took place: the hippodrome gradually lost its function as the place of performance, the ceremony of *prokypsis* came into fashion, and after the end

<sup>8</sup> B. Lavagnini, *Alle origini del verso politico* (Palermo, 1983).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. W. Hörandner, 'Zur kommunikativen Funktion byzantinischer Gedichte', in I. Ševčenko and G.G. Litavrin, eds., *Acts, XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Selected Papers*, vol. 4 (Shepherdstown, WV, 1996), 104–18, at 117.

of the twelfth century the singers were no longer those of the demes, at least the demes are thereafter not mentioned in the sources. Yet regarding the structure and motifs of the ceremonial poems (and probably also regarding the essential of the ceremonies themselves) there is a high degree of stability within this period. To mention just one example: there is hardly any substantial difference regarding motifs between the wedding poems of Prodromos and those of Nikolaos Eirenikōs.

In some cases the manuscript titles of poems furnish useful information. No fewer than eight poems by Theodore Prodromos<sup>10</sup> bear the note τοῖς δήμοις ('for the demes'; in one of these cases the note is transmitted in only some of the manuscripts). The wedding poem ascribed to Niketas Choniates, to which I shall return shortly, bears an analogous note. If I am right, there is only one more poem with a similar note, namely one in the collection in the Venice manuscript Marc. Gr. 524 from the reign of Manuel I.<sup>11</sup> There the verses are called δημοτικά, and it is not easy to decide whether this means 'verses for the demes' or simply 'demotic', i.e. political verses.

Regarding the *prokypsis*, it is sometimes hard to decide whether a given poem was meant for this ceremony or just for a similar one. All evidence available for the subject and its name dates from the Palaeologan period: there are several detailed accounts and also, though much less frequently (just twice in Holobolos), notes in the titles of poems. Nevertheless, in his fundamental study Heisenberg<sup>12</sup> was right in dating the origin of the ceremony much earlier, namely sometime in the Komnenian period. Michael Jeffreys<sup>13</sup> made substantial progress concerning this question. He postulated that if certain key words (γίγας, σκηνή, δίσκος and forms of the verb προκύπτω) occurred together in a poem, this would be a strong indicator that the poem was intended for the ceremony of *prokypsis*. This idea of taking the combination of a number of relevant motifs in a poem as criterium seems indeed to be a methodologically safe approach. Each of the terms just mentioned (γίγας, σκηνή, δίσκος, προκύπτω) taken alone would not be sufficient to allow us to draw conclusions regarding a certain ceremony. As Jeffreys himself stresses, sun- or light-motifs, even if accumulated in the densest way, would prove nothing, because they are part of the traditional repertoire of *topoi* used to symbolize a ruler, and they occur time and again in a purely metaphorical or ideological function. To mention just one example: the image of Helios as giant (γίγας), taken from the Old Testament (Psalm 18.6), in itself has nothing to do with a distinct visual realization, and even the verb προκύπτω originally means

<sup>10</sup> Nos. IV, V, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV in W. Hörandner, ed., *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974).

<sup>11</sup> No. 370, in Sp. Lampros, "Ο Μαρκανδός κώδιξ 524", NE 8 (1911), 187-9.

<sup>12</sup> A. Heisenberg, *Aus der Geschichte und Literatur der Palaiologenzeit* (München, 1920), 85-132.

<sup>13</sup> M. Jeffreys, 'The Komnenian Prokypsis', *Parergon*, N.S. 5 (1987), 38-53.

just the presentation of the emperor, not a definite ceremony. But all these terms occurring together are certainly a strong piece of evidence.

The essential of the *prokypsis* is the presentation of the emperor, the sudden appearing of the emperor and his family. By drawing a curtain and using artificial light this effect is achieved in a very spectacular way. However, this is basically the same procedure as in the ἀνατολή, the emperor's appearing in his box in the hippodrome, and it is significant that the verb προκύπτω is used also for this kind of ceremonial entry. Skylitzes once uses the formulation προκύψας οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν τῷ ἵπποδρομίῳ καθίσματος.<sup>14</sup> Whether in the hippodrome, at a certain place inside the palace or on the famous wooden stage, in all these cases the accompanying songs are complementary means to direct the attention of the audience to the emperor's epiphany. With Ἀνάτειλον, φανότατε the demes in poem XII of Prodomos<sup>15</sup> urge the emperor to enter his box in the hippodrome, and after he has shown himself to the public they greet him with Ἀνέτειλας, ἀήττητε. In an analogous way in poem V of Nikolaos Eirenikos<sup>16</sup> the choir first with the words Τμήθητι, νέφος, τμήθητι expresses the desire to see the emperor who is still hidden behind a curtain, and then, when he has appeared, he is greeted with the verse Χαῖρε, φωστήρ, ἐξέλαμψας, χαῖρε, φωστήρ, ἐφάνης. In both cases the vocabulary is very similar, and the two poems have also in common the fact that they contain both phases, i.e. before and after the epiphany.

Let us now glance at an author who is normally not considered in relation to poetry, Niketas Choniates. The edition of his orations and letters contains one single poem, celebrating the wedding of the emperor Isaakios II Angelos with Margaret, the daughter of king Béla III of Hungary.<sup>17</sup> In van Dieten's edition it is printed immediately after Niketas' speech for the same occasion. Regarding the manuscript tradition, it has to be noted that the poem is isolated: it is not transmitted in the same manuscript as the orations, the famous Marcianus XI.22, but in Barocci 110 from the fourteenth century, which contains mainly canons by John of Damascus together with commentaries by Theodore Prodromos and others. Nevertheless it was reasonable to publish the poem side by side with the oration for the same occasion because of the numerous parallels between the two pieces.

In the manuscript the poem bears the author name τοῦ χωνειάτου and if one does not doubt this indication as such (which to the best of my knowledge nobody ever has), the question has to be solved which of the

<sup>14</sup> Skylitzes (ed. Thurn), 419.44.

<sup>15</sup> Hörandner, *Prodromos*, 261f.

<sup>16</sup> Heisenberg, *Geschichte und Literatur*, 104.

<sup>17</sup> I.A. van Dieten, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, (Berlin, 1972), 44–6. Cf. the detailed commentary in J.-L. van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates, Erläuterungen zu den Reden und Briefen nebst einer Biographie* (Berlin, 1971), 92–5 (with bibliography).



two brothers is meant. Krumbacher<sup>18</sup> thought of Michael, certainly because he, unlike Niketas, was a well-known poet. In the manuscript catalogue Coxe wrote '[Nicetæ?]',<sup>19</sup> and Moravcsik, who dwelt on the subject in great detail, pleaded for attributing the poem to Niketas, and even regarded the parallels as sufficient proof of the poem being an extract from the oration.<sup>20</sup>

Van Dieten agrees with Moravcsik over most issues except the question of authorship. According to him Niketas' authorship is far from proven,<sup>21</sup> and he is right, for the parallels can be interpreted in different ways. One thing seems evident: the parallels are too striking and too numerous to be explained just by genre and occasion. There must be a direct relationship between the two texts, but what kind of relationship? According to van Dieten Niketas could have asked his brother to send him a poem and could then have used the poem as the *Entwurf*, model, for the oration. This is not completely impossible although we have to take into account the fact that the parallels, striking as they may be, are not as continuous as one might expect if the poem were really *the* model of the speech. Obviously Niketas did not use the poem as his *only* source of inspiration (I shall return to this point shortly). Besides, the whole idea looks a little contrived, and this applies even more to the alternative van Dieten considered, that Niketas could have sent Michael the speech as a model for the poem. So the most convincing explanation is still that both texts, the speech and the poem, come from one and the same author, and if this is true, the author must be Niketas. What remains is the question of the working technique of an author: did he write the poem first and then the speech or the other way round, or did he work on both texts more or less simultaneously?

As I mentioned above, beside the numerous parallels between poem and speech carefully documented in van Dieten's edition, there are elements where we cannot see a direct relationship between the two texts. To quote a significant example: in a passage of the speech<sup>22</sup> there is a series of polyptota joined together in the way of an asyndeton — νέος νέαν, ὠραῖος ὠραίαν, ἀνθοῦσαν ἀνθῶν. This formulation, while absent from the poem, has a very close parallel in one of the wedding poems of Theodore Prodromos (XLIII d 13f.):<sup>23</sup>

καλὸς καλὴν σεμνὸς σεμνὴν ὠραῖος πανωραίαν,  
ὁ νέος τὴν νεάνίδα, τὸν νέον ἢ νεάνις ...

<sup>18</sup> GBL, 284.

<sup>19</sup> H.O. Coxe, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues, I. Greek Manuscripts* (Oxford, 1853; reprinted with corrections, 1969), col. 180.

<sup>20</sup> G. Moravcsik, 'Niketas Akominatos lakodalmi költeménye' [Das Hochzeitspoem des Niketas Akominatos], *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlöny* 47 (1923), 79–86.

<sup>21</sup> van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 94.

<sup>22</sup> van Dieten, *Orationes*, 36.15.

<sup>23</sup> Hörandner, *Prodromos*, 402.

And the wording is very similar in another wedding poem of Prodrornos (XIV 32–34):<sup>24</sup>

καλὴ καλὸν σεμνὴ σεμνὸν ὥραία τὸν ὥραϊον,  
ἐμπρέποντα τοῖς ἤλιξι τὸ θαῦμα τῶν ἡλίκων,  
τρισευγενὶς τὸν εὐγενῆ, τὸν νέον ἢ νεάνις ...

Here Niketas, when composing the oration, did not take his own poem (or that of his brother) as model, but drew from the rich reservoir of formulas and rhetorical devices inherent in the genre. It is by no means necessary to conclude from this parallel that Niketas knew Prodrornos' poems, although this is not impossible, considering that one of them (No. XLIII) is still available in no fewer than six manuscripts.

The situation is similar regarding the information about the family of the bride. In the poem the author speaks in general terms just of a noble royal family, which is not unusual in texts of this kind. However in the speech the author points twice<sup>25</sup> to those *Ioulioi Kaisares* who are often mentioned as the alleged ancestors of the Hungarian rulers, e.g. in Prodrornos' funeral poem for Eirene-Piroska where the deceased declares: 'Ιούλιοι Καίσαρες ἐθρέψαντό με (*Ioulioi Kaisares* brought me up').<sup>26</sup>

As to the stylistic value, Moravcsik characterizes the poem as (I quote van Dieten's German version) 'ein lebloses, gekünsteltes Glashausgewächs der spätbyzantinischen Dichtungsart',<sup>27</sup> and van Dieten does not object — regrettably, for this is simply a platitude, one of the oldest clichés based on a very questionable notion of originality. It is the right of any modern reader to regard such products as bloodless; however, it would be much more adequate to call them highly ritualized. In my view Heisenberg found exactly the right words for this kind of poetry: 'Auch für die Hofpoesie der Byzantiner gilt das gleiche Gesetz der Gebundenheit an einen bestimmten feierlichen Stil wie für die Elfenbeintafeln und die Ikonen und die tausend anderen Requisiten des theokratischen Hofes'.<sup>28</sup> And then, speaking

<sup>24</sup> Hörandner, *Prodrornos*, 269.

<sup>25</sup> van Dieten, *Orationes*, 36.17 and 40.18.

<sup>26</sup> No. VII.6 (Hörandner, *Prodrornos*, 229). More examples in W. Hörandner, 'Das Bild des Anderen: Lateiner und Barbaren in der Sicht der byzantinischen Hofpoesie', *BSI* 54 (1993), 162–8, at 165 (= W. Hörandner, 'Εικόνες του άλλου ...', *Dodone-Philologia* 23 (1994), 115–31, at 123).

<sup>27</sup> van Dieten, *Erläuterungen* 94 ('a lifeless, artificial greenhouse plant of the late Byzantine mode of poetry').

<sup>28</sup> Heisenberg, *Geschichte und Literatur*, 111f. ('For the court poetry of the Byzantines the same law of commitment to a certain hieratic style is valid as it is for ivory plaques, icons and the thousand other requisites of the theocratic court').

especially of Holobolos:<sup>29</sup> 'Mir haben die Gedichte so gut gefallen wie eine Elfenbeintafel oder ein Seidengewebe oder sonst ein Prunkstück des kaiserlichen Hofes'.

The manuscript title of the poem contains the indication ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀναφωνήσεσι τῶν δήμων ('for the acclamations of the demes'), so it is one of those poems that were intended to be recited by representatives of the demes at a certain ceremony, and this function is mirrored by the choice of metre (the political verse) and the strophic arrangement. By contents, syntax and wording the poem is divided into stanzas of not exactly equal length. The first stanza contains eight, the second nine verses, and the remaining four stanzas contain ten verses each. Dekasticha are very common in deme hymns, and one might ask whether the lower number of verses in the first two stanzas is original or an effect of the manuscript tradition. The question is hard to decide, for there is no strong evidence for a loss of verses in these stanzas. On the other hand, the very formulaic character of this type of poem and its frequent use of parallelisms could easily have caused the dropping out of a whole verse, or of two subsequent half-verses. Such differences in length of the stanzas occur time and again. Poem No. XIX of Prodromos consists of twenty stanzas, seventeen being dekasticha and only two containing eleven and one nine verses. In other cases the deviations are much greater and more frequent so that they could be due to deliberate *variatio*. The question has certainly to be discussed for every poem separately.

The content of the stanzas of Choniates' poem is as follows:

1. celebration of the day (1–8);
2. praise of the imperial bridegroom (9–17);
3. welcome of the bride (18–27);
4. address to the emperor, mythological *exempla* (28–37);
5. joy over the emperor's reign (38–47);
6. polychronion (48–57).

The poem ends with the following three verses (55–7):

Συνεύχονται μου καὶ φασιν οἱ συμπαρεστηκότες·  
Γένοιτο ταῦτα, γένοιτο· γένοιτο, πέρας λάβοι,  
Θεὲ θεῶν, ὁ βασιλεὺς πάντων τῶν βασιλέων.

(Those present here pray with me and say: 'May this happen, may it happen; may it happen and come to an end, God of gods, ruler of all rulers!')

<sup>29</sup> Heisenberg, *Geschichte und Literatur*, 123 ('I liked the poems as much as an ivory plaque or a silk or any showpiece of the imperial court').

According to Moravcsik (and van Dieten) the last two verses are shaped as a prayer from the whole people.<sup>30</sup> This is certainly true, as far as the content and wording is concerned. However we should not take it for granted that the words *Συνεύχονται μοι ... οἱ συμπαρασθηκότες* are to be taken literally, in the sense that the following two verses were sung or repeated by the whole audience. I should rather suppose that the *γένοιτο* repeated three times in v. 56 was understood by the people as a signal for repeating just this one word *γένοιτο*.

Finally I would like to move to a report about a group of texts written for a ceremony; the texts themselves have not been preserved — unfortunately, because we could better understand some details of the report if we knew the texts it is referring to. I am speaking of the report of George Akropolites about the solemn entry of Michael VIII into the capital.<sup>31</sup> According to Akropolites it was the emperor's intention that the procession (*τὴν πάροδον*) should have a pious rather than an imperial character (186.7: *θεοπρεπεστέραν μᾶλλον ἢ βασιλικωτέραν*; 187.26: *θεοπρεπῶς μᾶλλον ἢ βασιλικῶς*). This means obviously that the main stress should be on thanking God and not so much on praising the glory of the victorious emperor. And the historian explains the means by which this air of humility, the *θεοπρεπῶς μᾶλλον ἢ βασιλικῶς*, was expressed: the emperor went on foot, while an icon of the Mother of God was carried in front of him. This gesture is well attested for various periods, at least for John I Tzimiskes and John II Komnenos,<sup>32</sup> and is a strong visual *topos* expressing at the same time the emperor's Christian humility and his legitimation by divine aid.

Now for this solemn entry thanksgiving orations to God (186.10: *λόγων εὐχαριστηρίων πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) and prayers of intercession for the imperial majesty, the hierarchy, the city etc. (186.10f.: *φωνῶν εὐκτηρίων ὑπέρ τε βασιλείας καὶ ἱεραρχείας ὑπέρ τε τῆς πόλεως ...*) had to be composed, and as Nikephoros Blemmydes, whom the emperor had intended to charge with this job, was too far away, in Ephesos, Akropolites himself offered to take over this duty. The emperor agreed, Akropolites set to work, and in less than twenty-four hours he succeeded in producing thirteen prayers, each with its own *σκοπός* (186.28: *δέκα πρὸς ταῖς τρισὶ συνεγραψάμην εὐχάς, ἐκάστην οἰκεῖον ἔχουσιν τὸν σκοπόν*), and these prayers were then recited by George Kleidas, the metropolitan of Kyzikos.

Several questions arise: why precisely thirteen prayers? One could think that they were intended for various stages of the entry, but Akropolites' account seems to contradict such an interpretation; he reports that the

<sup>30</sup> van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 93.

<sup>31</sup> Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg), vol. 1, 186f. Martin Hinterberger kindly drew my attention to this very interesting account.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Hörandner, *Prodromos*, 217.

metropolitan took his position at a certain point near the Golden Gate and recited the prayers there (187.13–16: εἰς ἓνα τῶν πύργων τῆς Χρυσείας ἀναβὰς ... εἰς ἐπήκοον ἀπάντων ἀπεστομάτισε τὰς εὐχάς). While listening to the prayers the emperor and his entourage stayed on their knees, and every time between two prayers they rose to sing the κύριε ἐλέησον and only after the end of the prayers did the entry through the Golden Gate start.

As I mentioned, Akropolites reports that each prayer had its own *skopos*. It is not quite clear what this term means here. There are two different possible ways of interpretation. First, the author could mean that each prayer was expressing a different idea. In a commentary to the Psalms attributed to Psellos (Poem No. 54 in Westerink's edition)<sup>33</sup> there is a passage about the *anabathmoi* (v.1151ff.) which runs approximately like this: 'The Psalms do not all have one and the same *skopos*; each of them puts something different at the beginning, one the many laments in Babylon, another the good news of liberty, another the joy on the way etc'. So there *skopos* is used in the sense of 'motto', 'subject matter', and Akropolites probably used the term in the same sense, meaning that one prayer referred to the emperor, one to the hierarchy, one to the city etc.

But there exists also another meaning of *skopos* which could be considered here. In a poem on the iambic metre ascribed to Psellos (No. 14; according to Westerink it could be genuine Psellos),<sup>34</sup> it is said that when shaping the verses one should thoroughly keep in mind the whole image of the *skopos* (ἅπασαν ἐν τῷ νῷ τοῦ σκοποῦ τὴν εἰκόνα προσλαμβάνων ἄριστα). There *skopos* means something like the metrical shape or the structure of the poem. I do not know of other examples of the use of the word with this meaning in Byzantine literature; it *does* occur, however, in late or post-Byzantine vernacular texts. Demetrakos mentions the meaning μελωδία, ᾄσμα and gives a reference to the *Erotokritos* (*Erotokritos* 1.487). In the Λόγος παρηγορητικὸς περὶ δυστυχίας καὶ εὐτυχίας, at lines 205 and 208, the word is equally used with the meaning 'song' (in the Italian translation it is rendered by 'aria').<sup>35</sup> In Modern Greek this meaning of *skopos* is still alive.<sup>36</sup>

If we understand *skopos* here in this way, as 'melody' or 'tune', then it would mean that Akropolites gave each prayer a metrical and musical shape of its own, as is the general practice with the odes of a canon.

So here, too, as in so many other instances, we are still far away from a definite knowledge of the precise meaning of given terms and of what really happened at a given ceremony. Nevertheless, there is cause for hope that by a close examination of the available sources and by close attention

<sup>33</sup> L.G. Westerink, ed., *Michaelis Pselli poemata* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1992), 327–90.

<sup>34</sup> Westerink, *Poemata*, 236.

<sup>35</sup> Thanks to Carolina Cupane for having given me this most useful reference. Cf. C. Cupane, *Romanzi cavallereschi bizantini* (Torino, 1995), 658f.

<sup>36</sup> Cf., e.g., D.N. Stavropoulos, *Oxford Greek-English Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford, 1988), s.v. σκοπός: 'tune, air, strain, melody'. I thank Christiana Demetriou for valuable suggestions.

to the techniques used in presentation we may one day arrive at a more thorough image of Byzantine court life and court poetry.



## 6. 'Rhetorical' texts

Michael Jeffreys

It is no surprise that the noun 'rhetoric' appears a great deal in this volume, usually employed in very precise and accurate ways, even if there is some variation of perspective from person to person. The abstract noun, in fact, generates a theoretical mystique which operates against careless use, even outside specialist literature. This is not so true of the associated adjective 'rhetorical'. We speak of 'rhetorical tones of voice', 'rhetorical arguments', 'rhetorical appeals', 'rhetorical gestures', all of them with a general significance which has little to do with theory. In Byzantine studies one often reads of 'rhetorical texts' and 'rhetorical poetry' in similar general terms. This is a negative category, referring to writings with which we cannot easily identify, which choose means of expression at every level which do not seem designed to transmit 'the facts', or to communicate straightforwardly with hearers and readers, leaving problematic aesthetics; they are texts whose significance we cannot work out — or, if we class ourselves as experts who can work them out, then we feel that they will prove inaccessible to the non-expert. We find them different, distorting and generally annoying. It is an easy solution to say as an automatic response that they were produced under the influence of rhetoric, just as the problem of another text might be that it is a bad translation from Japanese. Sometimes the adjective means little more than bafflement and disapproval. The purpose of this article is to try to give the adjective some of the precision of the noun and to tease out some of its meanings. If we call a text rhetorical, what attributes might we legitimately be giving it? What barriers or limitations might prevent our full understanding and enjoyment of it? What opportunities might exist for analysis which do not occur for non-rhetorical texts?

Examples of rhetoric in a text will be needed, and I shall take them from a rhetorical text *par excellence*, the 148 poems and more than 17,000 lines of the works of Manganeios Prodhromos, which Elizabeth Jeffreys and I have been editing for more than a decade. This anonymous mid-twelfth-century writer<sup>1</sup> is a well-trained rhetorician who is often said to be of rather low

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<sup>1</sup> He is not Theodore Prodhromos: Manganeios is a conventional name for an anonymus. The distinction was convincingly made by S. Papadimitriou, 'Ο Πρόδρομος τοῦ Μαρκετιανοῦ κώδικος XI.22', *Vizantijskij vremennik* 10 (1903), 123–32. Three more recent discussions of the

From *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys. Copyright 2003 by the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Published by Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3HR, Great Britain.



intellectual attainment. However his texts cover a huge range of subjects and approaches; our work on the edition has tended to open up new dimensions each time we return to study his text without getting much closer to the conclusion. By restricting my examples to one limited author I am giving up the possibility of broad, totalizing discourse which may be read in other papers in this volume: but there may be some gain in clarity of focus. I shall return at the end of the paper to the role of the editors of rhetorical texts.

The first possible meaning of the phrase 'rhetorical text' is a text of importance in the history of rhetoric, a rhetorical handbook or rhetorical model. The *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, or any similar modern handbook, will give a good list of the usual suspects, with extra insights available from several articles in this volume. First there are the theoreticians Hermogenes, Menander Rhetor, Aphthonios and co., followed by writers from the Byzantine period with a lesser status. Then there is a second list of recommended rhetorical models, from Demosthenes via the likes of Aelius Aristides and other writers of the Second Sophistic through to Christian and more secular Byzantine writers. The adjective 'rhetorical' may be applied to both these categories in an active way. They were the schoolbooks and more advanced treatises from which Byzantines received the rules of their rhetorical education, and the particular practical examples they were encouraged to study for the purposes of mimesis or imitation. These are texts productive of rhetoric.

But most uses of the phrase 'rhetorical texts' intend a more passive relation to rhetoric, a text produced by rhetoric. The choice of Manganeios Prodromos as an example will have alerted you to the fact that this is the category for discussion here.

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issue come in the context of the authorial personality of Theodore Prodromos, and are vitiated by wishful thinking, in the attempt to expand Theodore's work to include that of Manganeios and others, to produce the oeuvre of a complex genius. See A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, *Studies in Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge and Paris, 1984), 87-93; M. Alexiou, 'The poverty of écriture and the craft of writing: towards a reappraisal of the Prodromic poems', *BMGS* 10 (1986), 1-40 and R. Beaton, 'The rhetoric of poverty: the lives and opinions of Theodore Prodromos', *BMGS* 11 (1987), 1-28. Alexiou largely uses the arguments of Kazhdan-Franklin, which are successfully countered by Beaton, who has nothing better to offer; all fail in the attempt to explain away obvious differences leaving Papadimitriou's proof unscathed. Our edition will add metrical arguments to those of Papadimitriou: since they refer to bodies of work written at much the same linguistic level, they will not be affected by the strictures of S. Alexiou on metrical arguments involving the vernacular Ptochoprodromos corpus ('Bemerkungen zu den *Ptochprodromika*', in H. Eideneier, ed., *Neograeca Medii Aevi I: Text und Ausgabe* [Cologne, 1987], 19-24, reprinted in Greek in S. Alexiou, *Δημιώδη Βυζαντινά: μελέτες* [Athens, 1997], 71-6).

The most basic dimension of rhetorical influence on the texts of Byzantium is its impact on their language.<sup>2</sup> All living languages change and develop, and thus the educated class in most linguistic situations, past and present, has been engaged in a long lament about the decline of standards in contemporary education and resultant linguistic usage. But Byzantine rhetorical education promoted a series of forms belonging unusually far in the past, while contemporary Greek speech was avoided with unusual strictness; in its insistence on the use of the right linguistic register for each subject and occasion, and its archaic approach to the definition of 'right', it was more successful than most comparative structures in defying the passage of time, thus organizing Byzantine Greek literature as if the Greek language had not changed for many centuries. The language of all writing came to be a more or less closed system based on past writing, losing contact with the oral present of Greek. By the time of Manganeios Prodromos, a large proportion of the vocabulary, morphology and syntax of everyday speech had been excluded from writing of any kind. This situation is the so-called Byzantine *diglossia*, or rather *polyglossia*, for the past levels of the language in written use were multiple and the degree of strictness over different elements varied from writer to writer. I do not pretend that rhetoric provided the sole reason for the existence and continuance of this phenomenon, but rhetoric was certainly employed as a major theoretical justification for it and the chief framework through which it was imposed in education. The mid-twelfth century saw the beginning of the breakdown of this system, undercut by the appearance of the vernacular in writing, and Manganeios is one of the innovators:<sup>3</sup> but that is a story for another time.

The linguistic conservatism imposed by rhetoric extended to proper names. To give the most obvious example, you will look in vain for the

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<sup>2</sup> The best general treatment remains R. Browning, 'The language of Byzantine literature' in S. Vryonis, Jr., ed., *The "Past" in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture* (Malibu, 1978), 103–33 (reprinted in *idem, History, Language and Literature in the Byzantine World* [Northampton, 1989], XV).

<sup>3</sup> Poem 43 is a plea to Manuel I Komnenos put into the mouth of Manganeios' major patron the Sevastokratorissa Eirene, who felt wronged by the Emperor. It uses throughout a simple level of language, and in a passage after l. 200, where Manuel is challenged to make a formal charge against her, the taboos against the use of vernacular language in writing are relaxed, including, e.g., prime vernacular markers like the particles *vá* and *ǎç*, without excluding other forms characteristic of very learned levels of Greek. Another outburst is quoted at n. 34 below. Much of Manganeios' work is fully edited, much more has been published in scraps chosen to refer to personal and geographical names, while a great deal remains unpublished. References to Manganeios given in this paper are to the poem- and line-number of the future edition (an uncontroversial framework, based on the manuscript catalogue of E. Mioni, *Bibliothecae Divi Marci Venetiae codicum graecorum manuscriptorum catalogus*, vol. 3 [Venice, 1970], 116–25). Details of previous editions may be found in P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 494–500, where there is also a list of the titles in English.

word 'Turk' in Manganeios, because there were no Turks in any of his rhetorical models. The invaders from the East mentioned in half his poems, which he will have called *Τούρκοι* in everyday speech, had to become Persians in writing, because the invaders from the East in ancient rhetorical models were the Persians.<sup>4</sup>

I shall mention another more subtle linguistic example which I have addressed elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> At some time during the twelfth or thirteenth centuries some of the more complex Byzantine ceremonials were replaced by the *prokypsis*, the appearance of a person or group on a high balcony, often illuminated by all the light that contemporary technology could produce. There is a linear connection between the *prokypsis* and the balcony of Buckingham Palace. In Constantinople after its recovery in 1261, the *prokypsis* usually happened in the suburb of Blachernai, sometimes, it seems, from the palace, sometimes from a specially constructed scaffolding.<sup>6</sup> Manganeios deals at length with some ceremonies which we know later contained a *prokypsis*. It is interesting therefore to search through his poems for evidence whether the change in ceremonial had occurred by his time. The problem is that the noun *πρόκυψις* is a new coinage to describe the new ceremony, a word of the type to be excluded by the rules of rhetoric. However its source, the verb *προκύπτω*, is a perfectly good classical verb available for use in any genre. It is as if in English the verb 'emerge' were respectable but not the noun 'emergence'. The researcher is thus reduced to looking for cases of the verb *προκύπτω* being used with suitable appearances on high places. If people are said to be emerging at such a point, they may well be performing an emergence. There are a number of such cases, giving quite a good list of circumstantial evidence.<sup>7</sup> But the existence of the *prokypsis* in Manganeios, like most other innovations characterized by a new technical vocabulary, cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt in a rhetorical text. When the universe of Byzantine rhetoric is working perfectly, nothing new may be included in written form. Most change in daily existence is elided in writing by the strictly traditional language in which it has to be inscribed.

The next obvious characteristic of texts produced by rhetoric is that the speaking voice is always close to the surface, in spite of the written form in

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<sup>4</sup> It is uncertain how far Greek rhetoric in this detail was influenced by the fact that the high culture (e.g., the writing of history) of the Turkish courts of the period was more expressed in Persian than in Arabic or Turkish, as contrasted with the very Turkish presence of the Turcomans with whom the Greeks mainly came into contact; see, e.g. C. Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey* (London, 1968), 50–51, 250–55; C. Hillebrand, 'Some reflections on Seljuq historiography', in A. Eastmond, ed., *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2001), 73–88.

<sup>5</sup> M. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian Prokypsis', *Parergon* N.S. 5 (1987), 38–53. See also the discussion by W. Hörandner elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> Jeffreys, 'Prokypsis', 40–42.

<sup>7</sup> Jeffreys, 'Prokypsis', 45–50.

which we meet them (and in which they were very often met in the Byzantine period itself). Many such texts were produced for public performance as a sermon, a part of ceremonial, a competition piece, or for a number of other possible occasions. Manganeios writes poems for births, marriages and deaths in the imperial family and the high aristocracy; for triumph ceremonies; for other celebrations of military successes, apparently held in the palace; for family celebrations of the Sevasokratorissa Eirene, his main patron; for the dedication of ritual and devotional objects in many of the capital's churches, largely by members of her family; for a series of occasions in churches lamenting her misfortunes, in which her woman's voice is unexpectedly prominent; and many others.<sup>8</sup>

One of the many dimensions of this work is its possible immediate reference. Whether or not we know if these poems were actually performed, it is always necessary to be on one's guard over expressions implying time and place. Manganeios more than once refers to his surroundings in the palace as he speaks, and the rank of his audience. The assumed time is often some indeterminate rhetorical chronology fluctuating between the time of the models used by the rhetorician and events and names pointing towards the date at which the work was performed. But there is always the possibility that the 'now' of the performance may suddenly burst through, with a solid reference to its physical present. At a simple level, demonstrative adjectives and adverbs, 'that' and 'this', 'there' and 'here', could be used, with a real or fictitious wave of the hand, to refer to the place in which the performance was taking place, or another person present, or a neighbouring area or building. Several such references have been identified in Manganeios' work.<sup>9</sup> Rhetoric was often intimately connected with ceremony, and there is a need to watch for the remains of this interaction in the surviving text.

Let me take an extreme and fanciful example, well beyond the level of demonstratives, a diachronic issue of teenage psychology. I quote from poem 21, a wedding song for Manuel Komnenos' nephew, Ioannes the Protosebastos, marrying a wife from the Taronites family. The ceremony is probably a *prokypsis*, and many of the 221 political verses are addressed to the happy couple on the balcony, the groom around 20, the bride probably around 13 years of age.<sup>10</sup> I quote the climax:

<sup>8</sup> See the titles in Magdalino, *Manuel Comnenus*, 494–500.

<sup>9</sup> At 2.199 and 26.69, he identifies the scene of the poem performed as in the palace; at 8.359 and 9.1 he indicates that his audience is the senate (as opposed to other similar cases where references to the audience may be deconstructed by rhetorical analysis); at 20.121, 130, 191 and 309 he uses the word ἐνταῦθα (here) to distinguish Constantinople as the location of the poem (presumably a performance?) in contrast with the events described, which are those of the Second Crusade, approaching the city down the Via Egnatia.

<sup>10</sup> K. Varzos, *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν* (Thessalonike, 1984) vol. 2, 142–4.

Most beautiful Nireus, most handsome bridegroom, bristling with graces, you have surprised the girl. You are firing arrows at the maiden from your eyes like Eros: your arrow is your beauty and your fire is your hair. Hold them back, Komnenos, and spare your wife! She has been defeated by your beauty, all-beautiful as she is; she is fainting — don't be cruel — embrace the girl! She is all but expiring — don't be boorish — hold the maiden! Distill perfume into her from the roses of your lips, to strengthen and revive her, to bring her to great happiness.<sup>11</sup>

What are we to assume about this ceremony? Were these spoilt, palace-bred teenagers in their jewelled robes gazing forward unblinking from their balcony, like the mosaics of their relatives from the previous reign in the South Gallery of Hagia Sophia? Or did they respond visually in some way to the rhetoric they were hearing, and which, in the political verse form, they probably understood without too much difficulty? Did they switch off as we would tend to, listening to such a text — all that was just rhetoric? This is a question without an answer, and upon reflection I am not sure it is worth putting.

Such rhetorical texts are presentations by insiders for insiders, often referring to a situation seen every day by all or most of the audience, or to information widely spread by rumours from more distant wars. We should not expect explanations appropriate to a work of history, designed to be read by outsiders at a temporal distance. A simple example is the references, in several encomia for Manuel Komnenos, to a victory of his on the island.<sup>12</sup> The obvious island is Kerkyra, captured by Manuel in 1149. But there seems to another island placed in a later context, in 1150, and at first this reference disturbs chronology. Only Kinnamos' *History* troubles to explain that this island is a part of the Hungarian plain cut off by water in the rainy season.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps the best profession for Manganeios, if he were alive today, would be that of headline writer for a newspaper, where brevity, word-play and allusiveness now take precedence over any attempt to communicate with a broad audience over time. His poems, like the headlines of his modern comparators, will have given a small aesthetic charge to those in his audience who knew the code, who understood where the island was, who can recognize the forenames without surnames and decipher the puns now included in many headlines from all levels of the British press: the articles which follow the headlines do not always explain any obscurities.

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<sup>11</sup> Mang. 21.160–9.

<sup>12</sup> Mang. 1.103; 2.115, 127; 4.51.

<sup>13</sup> Kinnamos, *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comneno gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke (Bonn, 1836), 114.18.

Sometimes this obscurity in Manganeios becomes extreme, as when, in a poem dedicated to the Gardens of Adonis,<sup>14</sup> we are introduced to several trees with obvious human connections, and then several birds which seem to correspond to the trees. Those who have read the rest of the Manganeios collection will recognize in the golden many-branched plane-tree at the centre Manganeios' chief patron the Sevastokratorissa Eirene,<sup>15</sup> and in the other items a double list of her children and their partners, first in tree form and then in bird form. The easiest to identify is Theodora, a sad golden nightingale singing mournfully in isolation at the end of the earth. Her absence is often lamented in these poems: she is far away in the benighted west, helping to found Austria.<sup>16</sup>

But what are we to make of four of the last poems in the collection, which describe a massive structure on the Bosporos near Abydos, which in some way regulates the flow of the current and makes it possible to ensure the defence of the straits from hostile attacks?<sup>17</sup> The impression given is that the poems were inscribed on the monument itself.<sup>18</sup> There is no support that I have been able to find from archaeology for the existence of so huge a structure. It is true that the area concerned, for a good proportion of the centuries of the archaeological discipline, has been off limits, as an extremely sensitive military site. Yet it is also on a major shipping lane. What conclusions may be drawn about these poems, in view of the lack of confirmation from other sources? Manganeios' audience, at least, must have known whether this structure existed or not.

I feel that monumental inscriptions, as these purport to be, should be put in a different category from, say, narratives of military campaigns. In a military narrative, however careful the planning of an expedition and however generalized the description of events, it is difficult to imagine writing the text before the campaign has taken place. However the planning of a large engineering structure is much more predictable, and the first poet who wrote texts to be inscribed on it might find himself in a good position to have them used. I can only presume that these poems were a pre-emptive strike written on the basis of unfulfilled plans rather than of completed structures. The over-inflated claims made for the effect of the

<sup>14</sup> Mang. 41.1–91.

<sup>15</sup> On this person and related problems see E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys, 'Who was the Sevastokratorissa Eirene?', *Byzantion* 64 (1994), 40–68.

<sup>16</sup> Mang. 41.41–3, 48–75, and the following narration of the black day of her departure. She was married during the Second Crusade to Heinrich Jasomirgott of Austria; cf. Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, vol. 2, 171–5.

<sup>17</sup> Mang. 125–128: it is hard to imagine how twelfth-century technology could have achieved the extraordinary claims of these poems. Poem 146 may be another secular inscription, designed to be attached in some way to the Sevastokratorissa's tent: see J. Anderson and M. Jeffreys, 'The decoration of the Sevastokratorissa's tent', *Byzantion* 64 (1994), 12–13 (poem), 18 (comment).

<sup>18</sup> Mang. 127.5, 128.1, 7, with appropriate demonstratives, as described above.

structure may support this theory. But the point to be made here is they must surely have had some reflection in contemporary reality — if only at the level of planning. Manganeios' encomia for Manuel's military victories too were plainly not always accepted by the emperor's publicity machine;<sup>19</sup> there too the relationship between events and literature must have been acceptable to interested contemporaries.

Another pattern which may influence the shape of Byzantine texts which we read is the rhetorical genre in which it has been placed. There is a difference, for example, in the rhetorical textbooks between the prescriptions for encomia, depending on the framework in which the encomium is set.<sup>20</sup> The speaker may be choosing different subjects, a different mode and order of presentation and a different emotional colouration, not because of the facts of the situation but as a result of the rhetorical genre in which he has placed them. This may be seen more than once in Manganeios's work where he deals with the same material in two different poems falling into different genres.<sup>21</sup> Thus the question of genre may remove a good deal of the apparent significance of a rhetorical poem by paring away details owed only to the relevant pages of rhetorical handbooks. There is however a small factor operating in the other direction: the choice of the right rhetorical form is itself a historically determined decision. The fact that a poet chose one framework rather than another can often be informative about his thoughts on the subject of the poem.

Manganeios also makes the importance of genre a significant element in the construction of his poems. He describes a world of exhausted rhetoricians, overwhelmed by the majesty of Manuel Komnenos, who is constantly providing ever greater subjects for their encomiastic talents, challenging them to find new ways within the strict rules of reaching higher and higher levels of encomium.<sup>22</sup> At a quite different level, he has to overcome the problem of mixing genres, especially of showing sympathy

<sup>19</sup> See Mang. 8.214–7, 15.137–49, where he complains that the emperor took no notice of poems he had written.

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., the different prescriptions for encomia given by Menander (eds. D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson) under different headings: *basilikos logos* (368–377); *epibaterios* (378–388); *lalia* (389–394); *propemptike* (395–399); *epithalamion* (399–405) etc. Similar basic information on the person being praised will be presented in different ways, and different kinds of supplementary information will be demanded to fill out the picture.

<sup>21</sup> Poem 7 tells in simple narrative encomium the same story expressed by a *psogos* against the Hungarian king in Poem 31; the long encomia in 10-line stanzas of Poems 1–2 are paralleled by Poem 27, a much briefer poem in shorter stanzas and more popular style, beginning with a conversation between two Serbian rivers and ending with Manuel roaring in the persona of the lion of Boukoleon; Poems 63 and 64 are for the death of Konstantinos Kammytzes, Manuel's uncle, entitled respectively 'Speech of consolation' and 'Monody', with corresponding differences in tone.

<sup>22</sup> Mang. 10.309–325.

and sadness for the sufferings of his special patron the Sevastokratorissa when the basic occasion for the poem is a ceremony for which the rules of rhetoric demanded joy. He may begin with a mournful passage, then introduce the fiction of a festival-lover who stands up and objects that the poet has got the genre wrong. The authorial figure expresses confusion, apologizes and then starts off again with a tone more appropriate to the occasion.<sup>23</sup> He can even begin a poem by asking whether a conventional beginning is appropriate, and giving us a sample line or two, then replying in the negative to his own question and starting afresh in a more original way.<sup>24</sup> This playful foregrounding of the power of genre should alert us to the fact of its importance at other moments when it is working in the background, in control of the structure of the work, and suggesting choices which may only have occurred because of rhetorical training.

I want to deal together with two features which often exist separately and may both be seen as developments of the importance of genre. One is the *ekphrasis*, the special tour-de-force of description which stands out from its surroundings because of its striking visual characteristics. The other is the adoption not only of a genre but of a particular rhetorical model and passage to control the style and even the vocabulary of a passage. The best known Byzantine example is the way historians find it very difficult to describe a plague without some level of reference to the plague of Athens in Thucydides.

Poem 4 of Manganeios is the longest of the collection and also one of the most bizarre to modern taste. Many of its nearly 900 political verses are devoted to encomia of particular parts of the Emperor Manuel's body. During a long passage praising his eyes, there appears the following passage, with the sudden visual stress of the *ekphrasis*:

Come here then, Astios, you too should see a painter copying a different picture from that of Alexander, with realistic colour and highly decorated. But since it is in bad taste to summon someone from the past, come here, contemporary imitators of Astios' art, compare for me his famous picture with my recent one. The former showed Alexander on the bed, and on one side the daughter of Dareios and on the other some cupids, her escorts. The latter pictures you, the emperor, more solemnly, as a sun shining brilliantly in the midst of stars, and at your side it portrays the descendent of the Caesars, just like another moon, absorbing your light, reflecting in daylight an imperial ray. The former shows a shield and little boys. The latter shows noble generals standing around you in a circle. The one shows Alexander being lulled to sleep in luxury. The other demonstrates that you are a

<sup>23</sup> Mang. 41.130-68. The intrusive objector is familiar from Hermogenes' *On Invention* (see *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe [Leipzig, 1913], 138-40); this seems a complex example of the technique.

<sup>24</sup> Mang. 6.1-13.



shining star. The one shows Roxane being pulled to bed. The other pictures a brilliant and honourable empress. She wants to lull you to sleep and to have that painted too; but not even Apelles will be skilled enough for this picture: this is not a subject to be drawn, such scenes are not for paint. Who will picture the conjunction of the sun and moon?<sup>25</sup>

In this passage the work of a painter called Astios, a picture of Alexander and Roxane, is being compared to Manganeios' word-picture of Manuel Komennos and his wife, the descendant of Caesars Bertha von Sulzbach. In Astios' work Roxane is accompanied by cupids who pull her to the bed, while Manuel is attended by a sober group of generals. In both cases the female is about to lull the male to sleep — the faintly erotic undertone is appropriate for Manganeios, who likes racy stories.<sup>26</sup> An ambitious editor of this text might be tempted to get in touch with an art-historian and announce the discovery of Astios, an important new Byzantine artist, a significant new portrayal of Alexander, and an intriguing twelfth-century picture of Manuel and Bertha.

His enthusiasm will not last long. In examining the history of pictures of Alexander, he will soon come across a work of Lucian — a writer of the Second Sophistic, the major period quarried for models by writers of the Byzantine twelfth century. The work, despite its title, consists almost entirely of the presentation of a picture of Alexander strikingly similar to that described by Manganeios, down to the cupids that drag Roxane to the bed.<sup>27</sup> What is more the artist is Aetion, a name which could, with some difficulty, be deformed palaeographically into Astios. This picture, and probably its twelfth-century analogue too, is an affectation of mimetic style, not a feature of Manganeios' environment. The *ekphrasis* should always set the editor searching for a model. However by finding the source of an *ekphrasis* we have not explained it away. There is obvious point in placing Manuel in the same category as Alexander and contrasting his sobriety with Alexander's frivolousness. I should also like to credit Manganeios with a comparison which would have been amusing to many Byzantines. The collocation of Bertha, who had many Puritan virtues but disappointed the Constantinopolitans by refusing to use make-up,<sup>28</sup> with Roxane, who had become an archetype of the oriental temptress, is surely pointed and probably caused many smiles in the audience.

A defining characteristic of the rhetorical text since antiquity is its automatic adoption of a stance which persuades rather than informs. In the language of the news media, such texts are all spin and no substance. We

<sup>25</sup> Mang. 4.573–596.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. the story of payment for sex in a dream (Mang. 14.5–86: Bernardinello, poem VII), and the tantalizingly incomplete story of the wronged maiden (Mang. 147.26–49).

<sup>27</sup> Lucian, *Herodotos*.

<sup>28</sup> Niketas Choniates (ed. van Dieten), 53.58–54.64.

are used, in our quality newspapers and television channels, to the separation of news and comment, at least at the formal level. This is the nineteenth- and twentieth-century rhetorical structure to which liberal America and Western Europe have been trained to respond. The Byzantines will have got their news from the government press office, ready massaged into a form which supported the regime in power. Manganeios used the products of Manuel's propaganda machine uncritically: he wanted imperial commissions, and there was probably no other source of information other than rumour and careful source criticism of the distortions and exaggerations of the official account. The same information (sometimes with verbal identity) is used by the eulogizing historian Kinnamos, who barely survived Manuel.<sup>29</sup> Choniates, who lived into the next century and so could be critical, has little more solid fact on the period, but does use rumour, source criticism and his critical faculties generally, as well as his knowledge of subsequent history.<sup>30</sup> It is perhaps worth venturing an opinion on twenty-first century media, that in many cases they are moving towards Byzantium, to the rhetorical form of the one-sided press release. As a sop to the liberal ideal, we often have competing press releases or statements by opposing press officers, which are introduced, not analysed and certainly not resolved, by the presenter. At its worst, this becomes the *reductio ad absurdum* of rhetoric, the sound bite.

Such material in Byzantium is not only eulogistic. Beside the encomium there is also the *psogos*. Amid Manganeios' poems there are two or three passages of abuse aimed at non-Byzantine rulers. The most memorable, not entirely for the right reasons, is his poem 26, composed to celebrate a campaign against the Serbian ruler Pervoslav Uros II.<sup>31</sup> In the campaign of 1150, the Serbian had kept his forces in the mountains away from contact with the Byzantines, a tactic which Manganeios interprets as cowardice. The first half of the poem praises the courageous Manuel. The second is inspired by the fact that the name Uros, Οὔρεσις in Greek, has an unfortunate connection in sound with urination. Cowardice and urination are linked. I draw a merciful veil over the result. Poem 31 against the Hungarian ruler — "Ε, κράλη, νίκη φοβερά — is a little less distasteful.

Having reached the small scale sound bite, it is useful to look at ways in which Manganeios structures his lines, plainly responding to another part of his rhetorical training. He loves puns. The case of Ouresis is one of dozens of examples where a name, personal or geographical, sets him off with word-play. When he discovers that the area where some Germans

<sup>29</sup> Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos*, 18–21.

<sup>30</sup> Magdalino, *Manuel Komnenos*, 4–14.

<sup>31</sup> P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier: a political study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204* (Cambridge, 2000), 224–5.

were drowned in the Second Crusade was called Chirobacchoi and that the dangerous river was called Melas, he makes up a whole parable including pigs, Bacchic frenzy and drowning in black.<sup>32</sup>

At another level, the obsession with sound also leads him to balance his clauses accurately, often starting the two halves of his political verses with a similar-sounding word, sometimes extending this to dividing the first half of the line into two and thus having a triple repetition. The effect seems to be one of emotional climax. In the poem against the Hungarian Kral, he turns to praise Manuel with "Ε, βασιλεύς, ἔ, νικητής, ἔ, μέγας τροπαιοῦχος — 'Hey emperor, hey victor, hey winner of a mighty battle!'<sup>33</sup> At the climax of a monody on a general killed at Kerkyra, he bursts out in what is nearly Modern Greek, wishing destruction on the city:

Κέρκυρα, ναί, ν'ἀκυρωθῆς, νὰ μὴ συστῇς ποτέ σου,  
μὴ μείνῃ πύργος εἰς ἐσέν, μὴ λίθος ἐπὶ λίθου·  
ναί, νὰ σεισθῆς, ναί, νὰ ῥαγῆς καὶ βυθισθῆς εἰς πόντον.<sup>34</sup>

More often this parallelism involves three verbs which repeat the same prepositional prefix.<sup>35</sup> Another tactic is three words with the same termination, which produce a kind of internal rhyme.<sup>36</sup> I think that a rhetorical need for balance in the fifteen-syllable has inflated the work of Erich Trapp and his *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität* by a significant percentage. The limits of Greek vocabulary are challenged and, I am sure, new words are created by Manganeios and others, not so much out of sheer verbal enthusiasm or because they are useful for sense, but because they are needed with a specific prefix, termination and number of syllables to make a metrical balance.

This political or fifteen-syllable verse is, of course, the metre of Modern Greek folk-song. There is evidence that folk-song in this metre existed in the twelfth century, as it has certainly existed from the fourteenth to the present day. The triple pattern I have described is a significant feature of

<sup>32</sup> Mang. 20.130–226; cf. E. and M. Jeffreys, 'The "Wild Beast from the West": immediate literary reactions in Byzantium to the Second Crusade', in A.E. Laiou and R.P. Mottahedeh, eds., *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington D.C., 2001), 110–13.

<sup>33</sup> Mang. 31.34.

<sup>34</sup> Mang. 60.249–51.

<sup>35</sup> Manganeios uses to the full several prefixes, particularly μεγαλο- and συν- (see Erich Trapp's comments elsewhere in this volume): *μεγάθυμε, μεγάλαθλε, μεγαλοτολμητία* (1.111);... *ἀλλ' ὅτι συναμβλύνεται καὶ συγκαταμαυροῦται* (6.105)... *συναντιπαρατίθησι καὶ συμπαραδεικνύει* (145.12).

<sup>36</sup> "Ω τῆς καινῆς, ὦ τῆς φρικτῆς, ὦ τῆς καθόλου νίκης! (2.231); *ἀλλ' ἐκ φαιδρᾶς, ἀλλ' ἐκ λαμπρᾶς καὶ τηλαυγοῦς εἰρήνης* (7.19); *ἀλλὰ λαμπρῶς, ἀλλ' ἀμιγῶς, ἀλλὰ καθαρωτάτως* (7.93); καὶ *τίς ὁ θροῦς, καὶ τίς ὁ ροῦς, καὶ τίς ἡ τρικυμία* (42.58); *ὑπέρμαχε καὶ πρόμαχε καὶ πρόβولة καὶ πύργε* (22.52); *οὐκ ἔπτηξας, οὐκ ἔφριξας, οὐκ ἐσπαράχθης ὅλως* (24.115), cf 43.54–56, 41.1–2.

Greek folk-song, where it has been christened the 'rule of three', the νόμος τῶν τριῶν. The link is brought chronologically closer by the fact that there is a 'rule of three' pattern in a twelfth-century folk-song line surviving from Cyprus.<sup>37</sup> The apparent connection of rhetorical texts and contemporary folk-songs could be fortuitous, for after all the verse divides naturally at those points. But I think the similarity is too close for coincidence. If there is influence, how could it have operated? The alternatives, unfortunately, are likely to divide Greek studies along one of its old fault lines. Has Modern Greek folk-song been profoundly influenced by rhetorical patterns, thus enabling champions of the learned side of Greek culture to appropriate one of the symbols of popular Greek? Or has rhetoric, the primary medium of Greek learning, been forced to yield to popular pressures, and to pattern fifteen-syllable verses in ways which would appeal to those who used that verse as a medium of entertainment? If forced to answer the question in these terms, I would choose the latter, and assume that a rhetorician facing a large audience might try to appeal to that audience in ways it would understand, provided that he did not break any of the established rules of his profession.

I promised to end with the duties of the editor of rhetorical verse texts. If he or she is aiming the edition at the competent, at fellow editors, then no particular problem arises. But if the target audience is wider, then I feel we have a need to provide a rhetorical guide to the readers, much as we help them to understand the language used, perhaps with a translation, and we explain the historical setting for the text. The reader of a rhetorical text who has no idea of the number of its words and phrases which had been suggested, if not imposed, by rhetorical rules is likely to miss a great deal of the meaning — or rather to take far too much of its superficial meaning at its face value. This problem is not solved by the availability of a translation.

Perhaps you will allow me to end with a little *ekphrasis* of my own to describe the problem and opportunities the editor faces. Imagine a conventional textual edition which we are trying to present to an audience of varying experience. We can colour the page mentally. Every line will contain non-vernacular linguistic points, which appear in yellow, and will be summarized in our introduction. There will be puns and lines which are balanced in a clever way, which we may imagine in green. These will surely best be marked on the page where they occur, rather than relegated to the introduction. More important still are the red passages, which directly reflect the prescription for a particular genre, and may probably not have come to the poet's mind without his rhetorical education. Then there are the areas in blue, which are clearly under the control of a particular passage from a rhetorical model. In both the red and the blue the

<sup>37</sup> See M. Jeffreys, 'The nature and origins of the political verse', *DOP* 28 (1974), 160.

text we are reading is only part of the story: there is a clearly indicated intertext, which would have been apparent to many of those in the first audience but is only visible to an editor after careful study, and is completely hidden from most modern readers who have not studied the text at length. We need to provide that intertext in a useful form and position. I believe strongly that it is not enough to give a sober list of references: we need to find a way to show the reader of the text, during each reading, how the intertext is used, and what influence it has on the text itself. Elizabeth Jeffreys and I are discussing the possibility of a special *apparatus rhetoricus* for Manganeios Prodromos at the foot of each page. Such a solution could easily explain small scale rhetorical points and, with careful application, it may be able to solve the problem of larger rhetorical frameworks.

The interpretative colour that we propose to spread over the text does not limit our appreciation of it. It will not show a writer who is mechanically following the rules unless that is really the case — and with the help of some of the contributions to this volume we should be able to enjoy the text even if all the rules are being slavishly observed. On the other hand, we cannot appreciate the greatness of a Psellos unless we can see how he reacts to the conventions of his time, following some, bending other rules to his advantage and breaking them where necessary. Above all, I have used bright colours in my imaginary rhetorical analysis to bring the whole system into the sphere of a Bakhtinian carnival. I think that Manganeios enjoyed his rhetoric, and if we can find a way of sharing his enjoyment and transmitting some of it to our readers, we shall have gone a long way towards understanding and passing on that which is rhetorical in Byzantine rhetorical texts.

## 7. Dramatic device or didactic tool? The function of dialogue in Byzantine preaching

Mary Cunningham

That dialogue represents a core element in Byzantine preaching is perhaps a point so obvious that it scarcely needs to be stated. The Greek word *homilia*, after all, means 'conversation', conveying the idea that a preacher is interacting with his audience;<sup>1</sup> in other words, the homily is not by definition a monologue, despite the fact that it was delivered (we assume) by an authoritative preacher and assimilated by his obedient, listening flock. Dialogue is, of course, deeply embedded in the Christian literary tradition. It is used generously in the Gospels to convey what are believed to be Christ's true sayings, as well as his followers' response to his teaching and actions. Later, and especially after the fourth century, it was adapted for use in various Christian literary genres, including the passions of martyrs, apologetic works, polemical treatises, and many others.<sup>2</sup>

Dialogue also played an important role in many homilies from the fourth century onwards. The most striking examples of this, found in the so-called 'dramatic' homilies of shadowy post-fifth-century figures such as ps.-Chrysostom and Eusebios of Alexandria, have been linked with both Greek and Syriac religious poetry, although how much each of these sources influenced the genre remains undecided.<sup>3</sup> Judit Kecskeméti suggests that Amphilochius of Iconium and Severian of Gabala, of the fourth and fifth centuries respectively, were the first Greek preachers to

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<sup>1</sup> See G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1973), 44.

<sup>2</sup> See P.L. Schmidt, 'Zur Typologie und Literarisierung des frühchristlichen lateinischen Dialogs', in *Christianisme et formes littéraires de l'antiquité tardive en occident*. Entretiens Hardt 23 (Vandoeuvres-Geneva, 1976), 101-90; M. Hoffman, *Der Dialog bei den christlichen Schriftstellern der ersten vier Jahrhunderte*, Texte und Untersuchungen 96 (Berlin, 1966); B.R. Voss, *Der Dialog in der frühchristlichen Literatur* (Munich, 1970).

<sup>3</sup> S. Brock, 'Dialogue hymns of the Syriac churches', *Sobornost* 5.2 (1983), 35-45; *idem*, 'Dramatic dialogue poems', in H.J.W. Drijvers, R. Lavenant, C. Molenberg and G.J. Reinink, eds., *IV Symposium Syriacum. Literary Genres in Syriac Literature*, OCA 229 (Rome, 1987), 135-47; and a discussion of the whole problem of Syrian-Greek influence in A. Cameron, 'Disputations, polemical literature and the formation of opinion in the early Byzantine period', in G.J. Reinink and H.L.J. Vanstiphout, eds., *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East* (Leuven, 1991), 91-108 (= A. Cameron, *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium* [Aldershot, 1996], III).

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employ dramatic dialogue consistently in their sermons.<sup>4</sup> As we shall see in the course of this paper, this device served many rhetorical purposes and for this reason quickly became embedded in the genre. What perhaps has not been so generally recognized, however, is that dialogue remains an essential element even in the higher-style homilies of the middle and later periods of Byzantine history.<sup>5</sup> In this paper, I shall therefore examine the survival of various forms of dialogic preaching in the sermons of eighth-century preachers, including especially the roughly contemporary bishops Andrew of Crete and Germanos of Constantinople.

Before going any further, however, it is necessary to define exactly what we mean by the term 'dialogue'. This concept may cover a variety of different rhetorical devices, which may appear to a greater or lesser extent in different forms of preaching. The most obvious type of dialogue, which characterizes the 'dramatic' homilies referred to above, vividly recreates the stories of Christian tradition. The preacher, in the course of expounding a particular biblical passage, quotes speeches or conversations recorded in the Gospels. He then builds on these texts, sometimes inventing monologues or dialogues which may appear either as direct speech or framed in his own commentary: for example, 'Christ, John the Baptist, or Mary might have said ...' (and the invented speech follows). The most striking examples of dramatic homilies of this type, which were traditionally associated with certain themes such as the Annunciation, the story of Lazarus, or Christ's descent into Hell, offer, as it were, a liturgical play,<sup>6</sup> with the protagonists alternately speaking without any interruption from the preacher himself.

Dramatic dialogue of this type may be distinguished from another dialogic form which permeates homilies and festal sermons on all subjects. This is the rhetorical form which Ingunn Lunde, in a recent important article on the sermons of a twelfth-century Russian bishop, Cyril of Turov, calls 'extra-textual', as opposed to the 'intra-textual' or dramatic type described above.<sup>7</sup> Extra-textual dialogue represents the preacher's dialogue with his own congregation. Adopting the informal style sometimes associated with the late antique 'diatribe', the orator employs rhetorical

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<sup>4</sup> J. Kecskeméti, 'Doctrine et drame dans la prédication grecque', *Euphrosyne* 21 (1993), 31.

<sup>5</sup> Averil Cameron does point out the continuing use of dialogue along with other popular rhetorical devices in the Byzantine homiletic tradition in her 'Disputations', 96.

<sup>6</sup> The idea that dramatic homilies were actually performed as liturgical plays was first suggested by G. La Piana, *Le rappresentazioni sacre nella letteratura bizantina dalle origini al secolo IX* (Grottaferrata, 1912) and in his 'The Byzantine Theatre', *Speculum* 11 (1936), 171-211, but has not been widely accepted by scholars.

<sup>7</sup> I. Lunde, 'Dialogue and the rhetoric of authority in medieval preaching', in I. Lunde, ed., *Dialogue and Rhetoric: communication strategies in Russian text and theory*, Slavica Bergensia 1 (Bergen, 1999), 84-101.

questions, exclamations, and other conversational elements.<sup>8</sup> Although such dialogue is familiar in the apparently extempore homilies of early preachers such as John Chrysostom (who appears genuinely to have interacted with his various audiences and whose homilies are consequently filled with valuable information concerning these Christians and their everyday world),<sup>9</sup> it has not been perceived as an important feature of the later, more literary homiletic productions of the eighth century and onwards.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, extra-textual dialogue does remain one of the fundamental rhetorical building blocks of later Byzantine preaching. Whereas direct address in, for example, the homilies of Andrew of Crete, may reveal some clues about his congregation, one must accept that much of it seems to be purely rhetorical (and I use the word in its broadest sense here, meaning persuasive oratory).<sup>11</sup> This does not diminish its importance as evidence of the preacher's technique, however: exclamations, questions and other interjections to the audience must have served to engage their attention and testify to the continuing context of oral delivery and reception of all types of liturgical sermons.

In this paper, I propose to examine three topics in connection with the use of dialogue in Byzantine preaching. The first of these concerns the rhetorical function of dialogue: we shall explore how the techniques of both intra- and extra-textual dialogue reinforce the authority of the preacher and render his message more effective. The second topic is that of the theological or exegetical function of dialogue in Byzantine homilies. We shall examine the extent to which preachers use dialogue in order to teach their congregations the basic elements of Christian doctrine. The third and final topic relates to the historical circumstances of Byzantine preaching. We shall ask what dialogic discourse reveals about individual preachers' relationships with their congregations. Dramatic dialogue functioned on a number of levels, some of which we may not be privileged to perceive. To approach the question from various angles, however, may provide insight into some of the uses of this rhetorical device in Byzantine ecclesiastical ceremony.

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<sup>8</sup> On the survival of the diatribe form in Christian homiletics, especially with reference to the fifth-century preacher Severian of Gabala, see K.-H. Uthemann, 'Forms of communication in the Homilies of Severian of Gabala: a contribution to the reception of the diatribe as a method of exposition', in M.B. Cunningham and P. Allen, eds., *Preacher and Audience. Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics* (Leiden, 1998), 139-77.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the results of the research project described in P. Allen and W. Mayer, 'Computer and homily: accessing the everyday life of early Christians', *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993), 260-80.

<sup>10</sup> Cunningham and Allen, *Preacher and Audience*, 18-19.

<sup>11</sup> M.B. Cunningham, 'Andrew of Crete: a high-style preacher of the eighth century', in Cunningham and Allen, *Preacher and Audience*, 271-2.



Let us begin then by exploring the rhetorical functions of dialogue in Byzantine homiletics. As Ingunn Lunde, and before her, I.P. Smirnov, have stated in relation to Slavonic preaching, homilies are by definition authoritative texts.<sup>12</sup> The preacher himself is a symbol of authority, iconically representing Christ in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. He alone, as bishop or priest of the Church, is privileged to interpret the sacred Gospel readings in the solemn context of ecclesiastical ceremony. The appropriate form for homiletic delivery would therefore appear to be monologue. The preacher may rephrase and interpret the biblical text, but he will not be interrupted, nor will his analysis be questioned.<sup>13</sup> The homilist's authority is further enhanced by his use of quotations from the most reliable source of Christian revelation: the scriptures themselves.

If we look more closely at preachers' use of dialogue in interpreting the Bible, however, it is clear that this also enhances their authoritative position vis-à-vis the congregation. Firstly, the freedom with which the homilist handles the text, glossing the speeches which he quotes directly and inventing extra ones, in a sense sets him above, or to put it less controversially, *outside* the sacred text. The Gospel has been read and is understood presumably at face value by the congregation. The preacher's function in delivering the homily (which in the early Church at least would have taken place straight after the Gospel reading) is to mediate this text, or to explain it to the audience. This immediately places the preacher in a privileged position in relation to scripture. Dialogue represents the most daring form of interpretation of the biblical text since it allows the preacher actually to change the original words and dramatically to convey their hidden meaning.

Let us examine a few examples of this dramatic treatment of scripture by an eighth-century Byzantine preacher. In his homily on the Raising of Lazarus, a subject which frequently inspires dialogic expression in the homiletic tradition, Andrew of Crete amplifies Martha's conversation with Christ just before he approaches the tomb and raises Lazarus from the dead. Here Andrew quotes sections of dialogue in the eleventh chapter of John's Gospel, but supplements these with his own version of the interchange taking place between Martha and Christ:

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench: for he has been dead four days.' For he had passed four days in the tomb during which time the corruption of the dead man had taken place'. By this time there is a stench: for he has been dead four days'. This was a speech [interjects the preacher] which betrayed disbelief and

<sup>12</sup> Lunde, 'Dialogue and the rhetoric of authority', 84-101.

<sup>13</sup> I.P. Smirnov, *O drevnerusskoi kulture, russkoi natsional'noi spetsifike i logike istorii*, Wiener slawistischer Almanach, Sonderband 28 (Vienna, 1991), 19, n. 25; quoted by Lunde, in 'Dialogue and the rhetoric of authority', 84.

doubt. In all but the greatest miracles it is customary for disbelief to come first. 'By this time there is a stench'. Martha said this after smelling the odour, when the stone had been raised. And it was the speech of one who did not believe... [Andrew now goes on to suggest what Martha actually meant]: She was saying, 'Do not approach that you may not feel disgust. Since you are as sweet as myrrh, do not approach the stinking corpse ...' [Andrew ends this section by stating]: For it was quite clear that she had not been wholly freed of doubts, and this caused her to make erroneous statements.<sup>14</sup>

Various points are noteworthy in this short passage. Firstly, Andrew's habit of repeating short scriptural passages, sometimes over and over again, is evident in the repetition of Martha's words 'By this time there is a stench'. The device is used even more insistently elsewhere in the homily: Jesus' words, 'Take away the stone' (John 11.39) are repeated six times in one short passage, alternating with the preacher's excursions into the allegorical, or spiritual, meaning of this phrase.<sup>15</sup> He castigates the Jews for covering themselves metaphorically with the dead letter of the law and the veil, both of which are symbolically represented by the stone. This is soon followed by a passage in which Christ's words, 'Lazarus, come forth!' are quoted *sixteen* times, offering the preacher another opportunity to elaborate the anti-Judaic invective which had at an early date become associated with homilies delivered on Lazarus Saturday.<sup>16</sup>

Secondly, it is clear in the passage concerning Martha and Christ in the eleventh chapter of John which was quoted above that the preacher may employ dialogue in order to explore the characters of his protagonists. Such a study, which represents one of Aphthonios' standard rhetorical exercises, *ethopoia*, provides an opportunity for examining the motives and actions of various holy figures, as we saw in the passage cited earlier.<sup>17</sup> In his second homily on the Dormition of the Theotokos, based directly on an earlier, seventh-century sermon by John of Thessalonike, Germanos of Constantinople provides a lengthy dialogue between Christ and his mother Mary in which the Saviour explains to her the necessity and imminence of her approaching death:

'It is time, my Mother', says the Lord, 'to take you to myself. Just as you have filled the earth and all who dwell in it with joy, O you who enjoy such grace, come, make the heavens joyful once again. Make my Father's dwelling-place radiant; be a spiritual guide for the souls of the saints. For

<sup>14</sup> PG 97: 977 D.

<sup>15</sup> PG 97: 977 B-C.

<sup>16</sup> On the use of anti-Judaic polemic especially in homilies delivered during Holy Week, see M.B. Cunningham, 'Polemic and exegesis: anti-Judaic invective in Byzantine homiletics', *Sobornost* 21.2 (1999), 57.

<sup>17</sup> See G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, N.J., 1983), 64.

when they see your glorious passage to my side, escorted by the angels, they will be convinced in their faith that their own place, too, through you, will be to dwell here in my light ...<sup>18</sup>

Christ goes on in this vein for some time, delivering (through the mouth of the preacher) a homily on the happiness and freedom from passion attained in eternal life, his own close relationship with his mother, and her importance as mediator for all humanity. In an attractive, homely style, Germanos then describes Mary's reaction to these words which is to tidy her house, light the lamps, and finally lie down on her bed in calm acceptance of her departure from earthly life.<sup>19</sup>

The freedom with which Byzantine preachers of all periods handle dialogue, inventing speeches even for figures as exalted as Christ himself, expresses their authoritative relationship with regard to Christian doctrine and scripture. Extra-textual dialogue, or exclamations and questions directed to the congregation, serve only to enhance their role as mediators of the divine Word as they seek to involve their listeners in the events so dramatically described. It is important also to stress here preachers' constant variation in their employment of rhetorical devices. A more dramatic passage in a homily may be followed by a section which is dominated by exclamations to the audience, in which the preacher calls for an emotional response to the event which has just been described.<sup>20</sup> This in turn may be followed by a section in which dialogue of any form is entirely absent. Variation, in style, rhetorical devices, and content, is the rule rather than the exception in Byzantine homiletics: this surely must reflect preachers' need, even if their authority remained unquestioned, to retain the attention of their audiences.

Another important function of dialogue in middle Byzantine homilies is to create a sense of timelessness, thereby lifting the scriptural reading out of its historical, biblical context and revealing the eternal truth which it celebrates verbally. Ingunn Lunde has provided an excellent analysis of this technique in her study of the high-style homilies of Cyril of Turov. Commenting that 'Cyril's sermons appear to be of a "timeless" character, remote from the historical reality in which they came into being', she goes on to conclude that:

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<sup>18</sup> PG 98: 360 C-D; cf. B.E. Daley, trans., *On the Dormition of Mary. Early Patristic Homilies* (Crestwood, N.Y., 1998), 170.

<sup>19</sup> PG 98: 364-5.

<sup>20</sup> On the new lyricism of eighth- and ninth-century homiletics, specifically with reference to those written in honour of the Mother of God, see N. Tsironis, *The Lament of the Virgin Mary from Romanos the Melode to George of Nicomedia* (unpubl. PhD thesis, King's College, London, 1998), 180. See also M. Vassilaki and N. Tsironis, 'Representations of the Virgin and their association with the Passion of Christ', in M. Vassilaki, ed., *Mother of God. Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art* (Athens, 2000), 453-63.

[Cyril's] rhetoric is defined by the dynamics of two objectives: first, he seeks to structure his text in a way that makes it 'dependent' on a higher order, depicting a remote sacred reality; at the same time, however, it is his task to draw near the holy figures, and to present the sacred reality to his listeners in such a way that they may perceive it and take part in it.<sup>21</sup>

This analysis sums up well the paradoxical aims of many Byzantine preachers. Dramatic dialogue emphasizes the eternal message of their sermons by, in a sense, eliminating historical time; simultaneously, however, it presents this sacred reality to congregations in an immediate and understandable way, through the colloquial exchanges of the sacred personages.

It is standard practice in middle Byzantine homilies to open the oration with a call to the audience to participate and experience for themselves the events being described, as we see, for example, in the opening lines of John of Damascus's homily on the Nativity of the Theotokos:

Come, all nations; come, whole race of men, of every language, of every age, of every rank; let us celebrate with joy the birth of the whole world's joy!<sup>22</sup>

The preacher then amplifies the effect of immediacy through the device of anaphora, using in time-honoured fashion the word 'today' to link a series of sentences:

Today, the gates of sterility are opened, and a divine and virginal gate appears ...

Today, from earthly nature, [he] has fashioned a heaven on earth ...

Today, the 'Son of the carpenter', the all-devising Word of the One who through him has fashioned everything, the strong arm of the Most High God, having sharpened, through the Spirit who is like his finger, the blunted axe of nature, has fashioned a living ladder for himself, whose base is planted on earth and whose summit reaches to heaven ...<sup>23</sup>

Dialogue in this homily involves the preacher's direct address not only to the audience, but also to the Virgin's parents, Joachim and Anna, and to the Virgin herself. The exclamations, questions, and praise addressed to these personages serve to heighten the sense of immediacy. The congregation must soon have been persuaded that these events were taking place again in their midst in the context of the liturgical services (in this case probably an all-night vigil) associated with the feast-day.

<sup>21</sup> Lunde, 'Dialogue and the rhetoric of authority', 94-6.

<sup>22</sup> P. Voulet, ed. and trans., *S. Jean Damascène. Homélie sur la Nativité et la Dormition*, (Paris, 1961), 46.

<sup>23</sup> Voulet, *S. Jean Damascène*, 52.

Andrew of Crete, who was roughly a contemporary of John of Damascus but who moved from the Middle East to Constantinople and finally to Gortyna on the island of Crete, seems to take this element of 'timelessness' the furthest in both his homilies and hymns. Alexander Kazhdan has remarked that Andrew's homilies have a static and repetitive quality; this is because [he writes], 'the topic of both homilies and kanons is a feast celebrated by the speaker and his audience together, the spiritual banquet they enjoy in common, the mystery in which they participate'.<sup>24</sup> I have remarked elsewhere on what I termed a 'mystical' element in Andrew's homilies; this is particularly evident in his homily on the Transfiguration in which he enjoins his congregation to 'be made worthy of greater things, to be overshadowed by the cloud and thence for the eyes to be darkened, to be overwhelmed by the things seen and understood, and yet to be initiated by the One who transcends the light in [mysteries] which are beyond man ...'.<sup>25</sup>

It is thus clear that Byzantine preachers exercised complete authority in their role as mediators between the sacred events described in scripture and their own audiences. Dialogue served rhetorically to link both the subjects and the objects of the discourse: the past was brought to life, sacred time was translated to the present, and the preacher himself, the vehicle of all these epiphanies, created a dynamic relationship with his audience by his use of a conversational style. That not every bishop was deemed capable of expounding the holy word in the context of liturgical celebrations is made clear, however, in the nineteenth canon of the Council of Trullo, which sets firm limits with respect to orthodoxy and intellectual capability:

... And if any controversy in regard to Scripture shall have been raised, let them not interpret it otherwise than as the lights and doctors of the church in their writings have expounded it, and in these let them glory rather than in composing things out of their own heads, lest through their lack of skill they may have departed from what was fitting.<sup>26</sup>

The practice of reading out the published sermons of well known, earlier writers in Byzantine churches and monasteries after the late seventh century must reflect the worries expressed in this restrictive canon. A bishop who did possess the authority and reputation to do his own preaching, on the other hand, could exercise considerable freedom in his choice of rhetorical methods for conveying his message effectively to the congregation.

<sup>24</sup> A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature (650-850)* (Athens, 1999), 48.

<sup>25</sup> Cunningham, 'Andrew of Crete', 287; PG 97: 936.

<sup>26</sup> Mansi 11, 952; English translation in *NPNF* 14, 374.

I would like now to turn to my second topic of discussion: the exegetical function of dialogue in Byzantine preaching. Judit Kecskeméti laid the groundwork for this field in a series of articles in which she explores the uses of dialogue from a didactic point of view, especially in early (fourth- and fifth-century) Greek homilies.<sup>27</sup> As we saw above, Kecskeméti sees the first examples of dialogue in the Greek tradition in the sermons of Amphilochius of Iconium and Severian of Gabala, who preached in the fourth and fifth centuries respectively. She points out that in both cases, dialogue emerged against a background of theological controversy and was used to combat heresy. Since Amphilochius and Severian both came from Syrian backgrounds, their chief preoccupation in delivering dramatically embellished, exegetical homilies, was to emphasize the simultaneous humanity and divinity of Christ. As this style of preaching developed in the course of the fifth century, homilists continued to employ dialogue for two main purposes: firstly, to stress the two natures of Christ in accordance with the Chalcedonian definition; and secondly, to establish a connection between heretics of all persuasions and those whom bishops had, from the second century onwards, regarded as unbelievers *par excellence*: the Jews.<sup>28</sup>

It is interesting to observe that eighth-century preachers also use dialogue in order both to expound Chalcedonian doctrine and to identify the 'other', or those, including Jews and heretics, who have failed to accept this teaching. In a long passage in which Andrew discusses Christ's response to the news that Lazarus has died, he combines the Gospel's account of what Jesus actually said with words that he might have said. At the same time the preacher speculates aloud on what Jesus might have been thinking (and not saying). All of these speeches, including both actual and the hypothetical, combine to reveal the simultaneous humanity and divinity of Christ. It is particularly interesting to ask whether a stress on the separate *wills* of Christ is emphasized in the homilies of both Andrew of Crete and Germanos of Constantinople. In view of the brief, but well attested, defection of both men to Monotheletism under the emperor Philippikos Bardanes in 711,<sup>29</sup> Andrew's stress on the human and divine motivations lying behind Christ's actions in his homily on Lazarus is

<sup>27</sup> J. Kecskeméti, 'Exégèse chrysostomienne et exégèse engagée', *Studia Patristica* 22 (1989), 136-47; *eadem*, 'Doctrine et drame dans la prédication grecque', *Euphrosyne* 21 (1993), 29-68; *eadem*, 'Deux caractéristiques de la prédication chez les prédicateurs pseudo-chrysostomiens: la répétition et le discours fictif', *Rhetorica* 14 (1996), 15-36.

<sup>28</sup> Kecskeméti, 'Doctrine et drame', 30-2.

<sup>29</sup> C. de Boor, ed., *Theophanes, Chronographia*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1883), 362, 382; C. Mango and R. Scott, trans., *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284-813* (Oxford, 1997), 505; C. Mango, ed. and trans., *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople. Short History* (Washington, D.C., 1990), 113, chap. 46.

striking.<sup>30</sup> It is likely that this emphasis represents an effort on the preacher's part to distance himself from his heretical lapse and to teach his congregation the Orthodox doctrine of two wills, as well as two natures.

Perhaps the best eighth-century examples of dialogue with an exegetical function can be found in the two homilies dedicated to the feast of the Annunciation attributed to Andrew of Crete and Germanos of Constantinople. Homilies commemorating the Archangel Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary early became associated with dialogic treatment, although how just early remains a matter of dispute.<sup>31</sup> Andrew and Germanos draw freely on this homiletic tradition, providing extended passages of uninterrupted dialogue between the angel and Mary. In both works this use of direct, dramatic speech is intended to reveal not only the characters of the two protagonists, but also their inherent natures, or substances.

Andrew of Crete makes much of the fact that the archangel belongs neither to the divine nor the human realms, but represents an existence which lies somewhere between the two.<sup>32</sup> In his introduction to the scene, Andrew stresses the conflicting emotions experienced by Gabriel which reflect both his complete obedience to God and his own inferior status:

As he heard these [things], and understood what was commanded, bound by the divine decree whose power was greater than his, he stood halfway between joy and fear, having no clear courage of his own, but also unable securely to contradict ....<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> PG 97: especially 964C-968A.

<sup>31</sup> Various homilies on the Annunciation which have been attributed to such authors as Gregory Thaumaturgos, John Chrysostom, Basil of Seleucia, and Proclus of Constantinople incorporate dialogue, but the attribution of many, if not all, of these works remains unproven. See F.J. Leroy, *L'homilétique de Proclus de Constantinople*, Studi e Testi 247 (Vatican, 1967), 281-92. Even the famous Homily 6 attributed to Proclus (which includes two long dialogues, one between Joseph and Mary, and one between Mary and Gabriel), has caused dispute among scholars. Leroy, who provided a critical edition, believes that it was composed entirely by Proclus. See his *L'homilétique de Proclus*, 294-5; *idem*, 'Une homélie mariale de Proclus de Constantinople et le pseudo-Grégoire le Thaumaturge', *Byzantion* 33 (1963), 357-84. More recently, however, M. Aubineau, R. Caro, J. Barkhuizen, and L.M. Peltomaa have expressed the view that this homily represents a combination of different stylistic elements which may have been put together anywhere between the fifth and seventh (or possibly even the ninth) centuries. See R. Caro, ed., *La homiletica mariana griega en el siglo V*, vol. 2 (Dayton, Ohio, 1971), 308-44; M. Aubineau, *Chrysostome, Sévérien, Proclus, Hésychius et alii: patristique et hagiographie grecques. Inventaires de manuscrits. Textes inédits, traductions, études* (Aldershot, 1988), 589-92; J. Barkhuizen, *Proclus of Constantinople. Homilies on the Life of Christ*, Early Christian Studies 1 (Brisbane, 2001), 9-10; L.M. Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn* (Leiden, 2001), 65.

<sup>32</sup> For an interesting study of Byzantine perceptions of angels and their depiction in art, see G. Peers, *Subtle Bodies: representing angels in Byzantium* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 2001).

<sup>33</sup> PG 97: 892C.

After hesitating for some time over the significance of the news itself, the archangel then has to decide how to approach the Virgin without frightening her. In a passage which verges on comedy, Gabriel asks himself whether he should steal quietly up to the Virgin or approach her at a run; whether to knock at the door to avoid frightening her or slip through it without opening it since, after all, he is 'bodiless'.<sup>34</sup> Andrew uses internal soliloquies and dialogue to reveal more about the Virgin's human character. At first doubting the angel's word and her own ability to become Theotokos, she is eventually persuaded and confidently accepts God's dispensation. As in all other homilies and hymns dedicated to the Annunciation, Andrew is able to teach by means of dialogue the primary theological message which lies behind this feast, namely, the humanity of the Virgin and her willing acceptance of her central role in the incarnation of Christ. The central idea here, which is consistent with the recapitulation theology articulated by Irenaeus in the second century,<sup>35</sup> is that by her obedience and act of free will Mary overturned the disobedience and self will of her ancestress, Eve.<sup>36</sup>

Germanos of Constantinople's homily on the Annunciation contains even more carefully structured dialogues between the archangel and the Virgin, as well as between Mary and Joseph.<sup>37</sup> In this sermon each dialogue is organized into twenty-four double sentences (statement and reply), which begin with an alphabetical acrostic. Kazhdan has noted that the level of style employed in the speeches of the main characters reflects their position in life. Whereas Mary speaks in a simple manner denoting ignorance ('Go away from my town'; 'I am afraid and trembling'), the archangel adopts a solemn and elevated style which befits his divine habitation and the importance of his message.<sup>38</sup> Even more remarkably, it is noticeable that the Virgin's stylistic level changes and becomes more dignified once she has understood and accepted the archangel's announcement. In her dialogue with Joseph, Mary adopts a highly rhetorical style, employing elaborate compound words which express complex theological ideas.<sup>39</sup> *Ethopoiia* plays a part here, as Germanos employs a style of language which approximates the character of the

<sup>34</sup> PG 97: 893A.

<sup>35</sup> As set out in his works, *Against the Heresies* and *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*. See D. Minns, *Irenaeus* (London, 1994).

<sup>36</sup> On the development of this theme in Syriac and Greek liturgical texts, see R. Murray, 'Mary, the second Eve in the early Syriac Fathers', *Eastern Churches Review* 3. 4 (1971), 272-84; Hilda Graef, *Mary: a history of doctrine and devotion* (London, 1963-5), 111-14.

<sup>37</sup> CPG 8009, BHG 1145n. The homily is edited, but missing its conclusion, in PG 98: 320C-340A. Another edition by D. Fecioru, which includes the homily's epilogue, may be found in *Biserica ortodoxa romana* 64 (1946), 65-91, 180-92, 386-96. For a fuller analysis of the homily, see Kazhdan, *Byzantine Literature*, 61-4.

<sup>38</sup> Kazhdan, *Byzantine Literature*, 62-3.

<sup>39</sup> Kazhdan, *Byzantine Literature*, 63.



person described; as this character changes and matures, her language reveals her new, exalted status.<sup>40</sup>

The differences between Andrew of Crete's and Germanos of Constantinople's treatment of the dialogues in the Annunciation are striking: whereas Andrew offers more inward-looking soliloquies and self-questioning statements by the main characters, Germanos stresses their interaction and actual impact on each other. As Kazhdan puts it, 'in Germanos' work there is stricter organization of material and the perception that events are in motion rather than in mystical uniformity'.<sup>41</sup> These variations may stem from the different characters of the two preachers, but they may also reflect separate strands in the dialogic treatment of biblical scenes in festal homilies.

Finally, let us examine briefly the evidence which dialogue may provide about the reception of sermons by eighth-century Byzantine audiences. Here it is necessary to return to the distinction made at the beginning of this paper between 'extra-textual' and 'intra-textual' dialogue. As I have concluded elsewhere with regard to the former, preachers' highly rhetorical dialogue with their audiences in this period may not in fact tell us a great deal about the composition of these congregations or about their assimilation of the sermon.<sup>42</sup> Most exclamations, informal remarks, and rhetorical questions could belong to the convention of homiletic 'diatribe'. Uthemann is surely correct in his conclusion that such rhetorical language is not very revealing of actual interaction between preachers and their audiences.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, many essential features of homiletic discourse seem to represent at least a 'wake-up call' to the audience: among these may be included the constant variations in rhetorical style, the admonitions to 'look', 'hear', 'sense' the events being described, the use of dramatic dialogue, prose rhythm, and many others.

As far as intra-textual dialogue is concerned, it is impossible in the absence of decisive evidence to draw conclusions about the performance of dramatic homilies, such as those attributed to Proclus and Germanos on the Annunciation, in church celebrations. These homilies are distinctive in their inclusion of long passages of dramatic dialogue which are uninterrupted by any form of commentary. It is certainly difficult to imagine how one bishop would have delivered such a homily: would he have adopted different tones of voice or physical actions as he spoke through the mouths of the protagonists? This question will probably never be answered, but while rejecting the likelihood of liturgical plays

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<sup>40</sup> On the correct use of *ethopoiia*, which should reveal the character through the use of appropriate language, see R. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge, 1989), 22.

<sup>41</sup> Kazhdan, *Byzantine Literature*, 61.

<sup>42</sup> Cunningham, 'Andrew of Crete', 272.

<sup>43</sup> See n. 8.

performed outside the offices and liturgies of the Church at least in the early and middle periods, I think it highly possible that various clerics might have delivered the speeches of different characters within the normal context of homiletic delivery. If hymns and antiphons were performed by several choirs in the cathedral rite,<sup>44</sup> why would a similar technique not be appropriate when it came to preaching?

In conclusion, it is clear that dialogue of every kind, from the wholly dramatic re-enactments of biblical scenes involving both authentic and invented speeches by the main protagonists to the simple diatribal exclamations of preachers to their congregations, serves a primarily rhetorical purpose in Byzantine homiletics. The variations in style, lively interchange, and encouragement of the audience's involvement in the discourse all help, along with other devices such as repetition, narrative, and ekphrasis, or description, to engage the listener's attention. These represent features of a primarily oral genre, although the question whether homilies served later as liturgical, or even private, devotional readings remains open to investigation. As I have attempted to show in this paper, dialogue could fulfil other functions besides adding to the rhetorical impact of Byzantine sermons. The use of dialogue enhances the authority of the preacher as he reveals his ability to interpret and even paraphrase biblical readings. Furthermore, dialogue may function as a method for conveying doctrinal teaching to the congregation in a way that, like artistic depictions of festal scenes, is vivid and easy to understand. Finally, although questions concerning audience comprehension and the delivery of sermons in church may never be resolved, both internal and external evidence may provide some clues. Common sense suggests that rhetorical devices of all kinds were used for many different reasons — primary among these, however, would be those which served the three main purposes of homiletic delivery: persuasion, performance, and praise.

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<sup>44</sup> O. Strunk, *Essays on Music in the Byzantine World* (New York, 1977), 112-50, 165-90.



Section III  
Literature and rhetoric



## 8. How should a Byzantine text be read?

Jakov Ljubarskij

I begin in good traditional fashion with a *captatio benevolentiae*. The topic of this paper was not invented by me but was suggested by the organizers of the symposium: it puzzled me somewhat and I was, and still am, in doubt whether I am the right person to make proposals about how a Byzantine text should be read, and indeed whether in principle this is a task that can be undertaken at all. Then I began questioning myself: should the works of medieval Greek writers be read differently from any other texts of the world literature? Should texts of different genres be interpreted in the same way? Should the modern reader try to imitate his medieval forerunners in appreciating Byzantine texts or should he approach them in the usual way? And so forth. To tell the truth, I could not find definite answers for some of these questions. Nevertheless I will dare now to suggest some points to bear in mind when reading Byzantine texts, in the hope that they might provoke a discussion which would not be without value for scholars and readers, and which have some relevance in a series of papers considering the role of rhetoric in Byzantium.

It is clear to everyone that the traditional methods of classical philology (by which I mean the correct interpretation and emendation of a text and the extraction of historical information from it) can and must be used by Byzantinists. Moreover, these methods are the *conditio sine qua non* for every serious work in the field of Byzantine studies. But the problem under discussion now is as follows: is there anything peculiar in the works of Byzantine authors that differentiates them from other texts and should make readers deal with them differently? Some scholars tend to answer this question positively, and there is a wide-spread opinion that Byzantine texts are of a special kind. One can see two different approaches to this problem. According to the first, the Byzantine writer was concerned more with demonstrating his (or her) rhetorical skills and imitating ancient authors than with describing historical reality; therefore the historical information to be extracted from their texts is scarce, worthless, and cannot be taken at face value. This approach was theoretically based and most explicitly formulated by two outstanding scholars: C. Mango and S. Averintzev. To summarize this position briefly,

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Byzantine literature has little contact with reality and is a kind of 'distorting mirror' (I refer here to the title of Cyril Mango's well-known inaugural lecture).<sup>1</sup> Byzantine writers, influenced by the 'school norms' (i.e. an education based on rhetoric, acquired at school) were not able to express their own feelings and thoughts in their compositions;<sup>2</sup> therefore the modern reader can judge how well or how badly a Byzantine writer was educated, but as a rule fails to learn what he really felt and thought.

The other approach to the problem of reading and interpreting Byzantine texts originates from the Byzantines themselves. It is well known that many allegorical and symbolical interpretations of ancient texts were composed in Byzantium. This has enabled some modern scholars to apply this method to the works of the Byzantines themselves. It is well known, as the adepts of this theory assure us, that the surrounding world was for the Byzantines full of signs and symbols, sent by Higher Powers, God, Providence and so on; therefore the presentation of real life was nothing more than the means of revealing or, on the contrary, concealing these signs and symbols. So the main task of the modern scholar is to penetrate beneath the surface and try to understand and explain what was in reality meant by the author.

It is in this connection that I would like to refer to Sofia Poljakova, whose works are very significant because she tried to apply this method to the literary genre which seems to be the least appropriate for this kind of interpretation: I mean the Byzantine erotic romances. The existence of a real erotic literature seemed to her to be hardly possible in pious Byzantium and she tried to see in the actions and earthly feelings of the romances' characters the representation of Divine Love and similar lofty subjects.<sup>3</sup>

It may seem strange that the attempt to approach at least some Byzantine texts as pieces of literature is very recent. Its adherents do not wish to separate the works of medieval Greek writers from other literatures but, on the contrary, try to apply to them criteria common to other literatures. In this respect I would refer to Alexander Kazhdan's recent study on Byzantine literature (the first volume of the six planned by him).<sup>4</sup> I do this, not because he was the first to support this view, but

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in C. Mango, *Byzantium and its Image* (Aldershot, 1984), II.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S. Averintzev, 'Vizantijskaja ritorika. Shkolnaja norma literaturnogo tvorcestva v sostave vizantijskoj kultury', in S. Averintzev, *Ritorika i istoki jevropeskoj literaturnoj tradicii* (Moscow, 1996). At the same time S. Averintzev, like some other scholars recently (e.g. G. Kustas, H. Hunger, P. Magdalino), acknowledges the major role played by rhetoric, which was in a sense a way of thinking and even of living for Byzantine intellectuals.

<sup>3</sup> S. Poljakova, *Iz istorii vizantijskogo romana* (Moscow, 1979); cf. J. Ljubarskij, 'Der byzantinischer Roman in der Sicht der russischen Byzantinistik', in P. Agapitos and D. Reinsch, eds., *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 2000), 19–24.

<sup>4</sup> A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature (650–850)* (Athens, 1999).

because it is in this book that he formulates the principles most clearly and explicitly. The crucial point of Kazhdan's deliberations is the necessity of dividing Byzantine texts into *Literatur* and *Schrifttum*, perhaps to be translated as 'literature' and 'writing'. In contrast to the latter, literary texts — 'literature' — do not reveal their sense *expressis verbis*, but have two or even more levels, and these levels have nothing to do with direct and allegorical senses, postulated by medieval commentators and followed by S. Poljakova and others. Kazhdan has in mind the polysemy inherent in every fiction.

Let me take a specimen of Kazhdan's analytical method. When analysing the Homily on the Annunciation by the Patriarch Germanos I (early eighth century), Kazhdan points to two dialogues which it presents. The first is between God's messenger Gabriel and the Virgin Mary, the second is between Mary and her husband Joseph. The archangel Gabriel is armed with complete knowledge of future events and their 'world-wide significance'. Accordingly his speech is lofty and very solemn, and its wording and syntax is extremely rhetorical. By way of contrast, Mary is a simple girl unable to understand either his allusions or his wording. Therefore her vocabulary and syntax is appropriate to her position. 'Go away from my town', 'I am not accustomed to have social intercourse with a stranger', she says to Gabriel. The second dialogue (that of Mary and Joseph) is similarly structured, but Mary is now aware of her divine mission. Accordingly her speech becomes rhetorical and her vocabulary elevated. On the contrary, Joseph is depicted here as a simple carpenter who cannot understand the sacramental meaning of Mary's words. His speech seems now to be naïve and simple like that of Mary in the first dialogue.<sup>5</sup>

Those who read and listened to Germanos' Homily must have been well aware of the content of the Annunciation story, and Germanos' aim was surely not to retell it but to impress the audience. The way which the patriarch chose is absolutely artistic: in a sense the 'overtones' of his Homily are more important than its main content.

This specimen is very significant since the artistic value does not coincide here with the rhetorical ambitions of the author and in a sense is even in opposition to them. Indeed, it is possible to give many examples of how Byzantine writers transgress the limits of rhetoric and enter the field of fiction. It will suffice here to give two examples, taken from the *History* of Leo the Deacon, a work which surely cannot be considered a masterpiece of world literature. Thus it is the more noteworthy how great is the role played by the 'overtones' in the episodes to be cited. I would

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<sup>5</sup> Kazhdan, *Byzantine Literature*, 63; cf. the discussion by Mary Cunningham elsewhere in this volume.



like to remind the reader of the famous scene when John Tzimiskes murders Nikephoros Phokas.

The empress Theophano, who was in love with John Tzimiskes, asked her husband Nikephoros not to close the door of his chamber for the night as she might come to him. The conspirators, gathered in Theophano's chamber, left the room awaiting John who was supposed to come from outside. As Leo writes, 'it was five o'clock in the morning, the cold north wind caused a movement of air and a storm, thick snow was falling'. John and his companions came, entered the palace, and joined the rest of the conspirators. The terrible scene of Nikephoros' murder followed.<sup>6</sup> We cannot regard this episode as an example of rhetorical ornamentation, even less can we treat it allegorically or symbolically. We cannot even be sure that it was really stormy and cold during the night of the murder. It is much more probable that the stormy and cold night was necessary so that Leo could stress the tragic context of the events. This is a very rare case where nature has been caught up in the narrative of an event. In short, the passage is a real fiction: the phrases and words say much more than they seem to be saying.

The same can be said about another episode by the same writer. The rebellious Bardas Phokas, deserted by his adherents, is lying sleepless at night on the eve of his *démarche*; he prays to God, whispering a psalm. Suddenly he hears a voice, prohibiting him from chanting the psalm. Phokas stands up frightened and waits for the dawn. But in the morning a new vision terrifies him still more. On mounting his horse he notices suddenly that his purple boots (a symbol of imperial power) have become black. Utterly puzzled, Phokas questions his servants, asking if they have changed the boots, but servants ask him to take a look once more at the boots which turn out to be purple once again.<sup>7</sup>

To be sure, both the voice from above and Phokas' distorted vision are instances of the heavenly signs very often employed by Byzantine historiographers, but at the same time they can be seen as the painful hallucinations of a person with a guilty conscience, like that of numerous tragic characters in European Renaissance literature. At any rate this scene is surely ambivalent. As I have noted above, Leo the Deacon's *History* can hardly be thought of as a masterpiece of literature, yet we have found clear instances of polysemy. Indeed, among Byzantine texts in general one can find many cases of even more impressive and 'multi-dimensional' passages.

I would like to give as an example two works of Psellos addressed to the patriarch Michael Keroularios. The first one is considered generally to be a letter but actually seems to be much more like a speech or even a

<sup>6</sup> C. Hase, ed., *Leonis Diaconi Caloensis Historiae libri decem* (Bonn, 1828), 87.1–90.11.

<sup>7</sup> Leo. Diac., 120.24–121.23.

pamphlet rather than an ordinary letter.<sup>8</sup> It is written in the traditional form of a *synkrisis*, i.e. a comparison between the almighty patriarch and Psellos himself. Generally speaking, the main bulk of the work is an exposition of the contrasts between Keroularios and Psellos. The patriarch is a divine, celestial creature while the nature of the philosopher is terrestrial and low. The patriarch originated from a noble family, while Psellos' origin is humble, and so forth. Psellos seems to extol Keroularios and blame himself. But several times extolling is suddenly transformed into blaming, while blaming turns into praise. Their object meanwhile remain the same. Psellos, for instance, praises the patriarch for his 'firm character and steady soul' (τὸ περιὸν τοῦ στασίμου ἡθους καὶ τῆς βεβηκυίας ψυχῆς), but he cannot resist adding 'to say nothing of your contempt for education' (ἵνα μὴ λέγω τὸ κατεπεφροντικὸς τῆς παιδεύσεως). Having written this sentence Psellos thought suddenly of its negative sense and wished — sincerely or not — to smooth over the bad impression; therefore he concluded the passage with a short remark: 'I say this in order not to censure you but to glorify your steadiness'.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, Psellos' self-humiliation (he is an ordinary human being in contrast to 'celestial' Keroularios) cannot be serious at all and, as a matter of fact, it turns very soon into tremendous boasting and huge *hyperbole* for his famous name attracted people from all the parts of the earth: Celts, Arabs, Egyptians, Persians, Ethiopians and so on and so on.<sup>10</sup> But these vainglorious declarations in their turn are changed into 'humble assertions' of the type, 'I am a simple and ingenuous person' (ἀρχαίως ἔχω καὶ ἀμαθῶς).<sup>11</sup>

Psellos' letter is evidently full of contradictions which, I suppose, reflect its author's unstable, impulsive, nervous and inconsistent nature. Hatred for the patriarch, mockery and vainglory are all mixed together. In practice, Psellos' letter has several levels and the author is constantly balancing between them.

The opposition between explicit words and implicit meaning is still more obvious in the funerary oration or epitaph devoted to Keroularios.<sup>12</sup> The genre of epitaph is by definition a sort of *laudatio*, and Psellos praises Keroularios in the usual manner of a panegyrist. All the necessary virtues are ascribed to the late patriarch and in this respect his image differs hardly at all from those of other characters in Psellos' laudatory speeches. But high-style wording and emphatic praise may seem

<sup>8</sup> The letter has been edited twice: C. Sathas, *MB*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1874), 207 and U. Criscuolo, *Michele Psello, Epistola a Michele Cerulario* (Naples, 1973); my references are to Criscuolo's edition.

<sup>9</sup> Criscuolo, *Psello, Epistola*, 25.107–112 (my translation).

<sup>10</sup> Criscuolo, *Psello, Epistola*, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Criscuolo, *Psello, Epistola*, 27.166.

<sup>12</sup> K. Sathas, *MB*, vol. 4, 303–87.

suspicious to an attentive reader, particularly if he is aware of the implications of the relations between the writer and patriarch. And indeed, as in his 'letter' to Keroularios mentioned above, the negative image of the patriarch, as seen by Psellos, emerges gradually from traditional praising. Trying, for instance, to educate the people, the 'pious and virtuous' Keroularios himself looks always gloomy, dark and irritated. As we know well from elsewhere in his writings, all these traits are negative in Psellos' view. In this epitaph one can distinguish two levels, surface and internal. Properly speaking, the epitaph is a specimen of irony in the classical sense of the word: the author states openly precisely the opposite to what he thinks in reality.

With this reference to irony, I have touched on a very important and interesting topic, which has only recently begun to attract the interest of Byzantinists. Byzantine authors, as a rule solemn, full of dignity and pious, are not normally regarded as ironic. However, recently traces of humour and irony in their works have become evident, at least to some scholars.<sup>13</sup> The problem of irony is of special importance for the aim of this paper because ironic texts are by definition multi-dimensional and ambivalent.

Byzantine authors used many methods to produce an ironic effect. In order to demonstrate one of them I would like to refer to one of the greatest works of Byzantine historiography, the *History* by Niketas Choniates. I have tried to show elsewhere the ironic nature of some passages of Choniates' *History*,<sup>14</sup> and will cite here only a short extract of this analysis.

As some scholars have already stressed, in Niketas' work Manuel I is one of the most complex and contradictory characters in Byzantine literature. While John Kinnamos and numerous encomiasts of the twelfth century depicted him as the embodiment of the imperial ideal, a brave and mighty military emperor,<sup>15</sup> Manuel in Niketas' *History* appears to be a agglomeration of different qualities which can not be easily combined in

<sup>13</sup> Recent works which exemplify this approach include: M. Alexiou, 'Literary subversion and the aristocracy in twelfth-century Byzantium: a stylistic analysis of the *Timarion* (ch.6-10)', *BMGS* 8 (1982-3), 29-46; B.A. Sarri, 'Η σάτιρα της εξουσίας στη συγγραφή τοῦ ἀρχιεπισκοπικοῦ Εὐσταθίου Ἡ ἀλώσις τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης', *Byzantinos Domos* 8-9 (1995-7); I. Grigoriadis, *Linguistic and Literary Studies in the Epitome of John Zonaras* (Thessalonike, 1998), 133-47; A. Kazhdan, 'Smejalis' li vizantijzy? (Homo Byzantinus ludens)', *Drugije srednije veka. K 75-letiju A.J. Gurevica* (Moscow and St.Petersburg, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> My paper on this subject is to be published in the Proceedings of the Symposium on 'Aesthetics in Byzantine Culture' held in Athens in the autumn of 2000.

<sup>15</sup> As I tried to show in my recent article (J. Ljubarskij, 'John Kinnamos as a writer', *ΠΟΛΥΓΛΩΣΣΟΝ ΝΟΥΣ. Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* [= *Byzantinisches Archiv* 19, 2000], 164-73), Manuel in Kinnamos' work was modelled after the epic hero Digenes Akrites. Manuel was represented in a similar way by contemporary encomiasts; cf. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 413-88.

one and the same person. Uspensky was inclined to see here even a symptom of the literary weakness of the work.<sup>16</sup> On the one hand, Manuel in Choniates' *History* seems to incorporate all possible physical and moral virtues; on the other, sceptical and negative evaluations of Manuel prevail throughout Niketas' text.<sup>17</sup> Even the elevated description of the beauty of the young Manuel and his enthusiastic reception by the citizens<sup>18</sup> is seemingly a kind of preface to the story of his licentiousness.<sup>19</sup>

However, there is at the same time, I suggest, a certain unity in Niketas' approach to Manuel. Whether he depicts his character positively or negatively, the historian always underlines Manuel's pretentiousness and affectation. Manuel is certainly brave and even reckless in Choniates' opinion, but in the first instance it is the emperor himself who is absolutely sure that only his personal appearance in the battle can frighten his enemies.<sup>20</sup> Manuel is always concerned about the effect he creates and tries to impress people and magnify himself in any way possible, either by his military courage or by his immense riches. For that last point I have in mind the episode where the emperor displayed all the gifts which he purposed to offer to the sultan and enjoys the impact that this has.<sup>21</sup> Not only does the historian present episodes which demonstrate Manuel's pretentiousness and affectation but he also characterizes him directly as αὐτάρεσκος, i.e. self-pleasing, vain-glorious,<sup>22</sup> stressing his aspiration for fame (κλέος)<sup>23</sup> and applying to Manuel the participle μεγαλαυχῶν (boasting) while describing his negotiations with the Turkish sultan,<sup>24</sup> and so forth. This opposition between great pretension and inner flimsiness sometimes shown by Manuel creates a comic effect. The greatest role in creating it should be attributed to the use of high-style vocabulary, and to the numerous allusions and quotations from the Bible and classical authors (modern philologists would prefer the term intertextuality), which are inserted in the text and stress this contradiction.

The last statement can be illustrated by some indicative episodes. The historian begins the story of the campaign of Manuel in Egypt in 1169 thus:

<sup>16</sup> F. Uspensky, *Vizantijskij pisatel' Nikita Akominat iz Chon* (St Petersburg, 1874).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. P. Magdalino, 'Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine *Kaisekritik*', *Speculum* 58 (1983), 326–46.

<sup>18</sup> Niketas Choniates (ed. van Dieten), 50.69–52.17.

<sup>19</sup> Nik. Chon., 54.64–74.

<sup>20</sup> Nik. Chon., 102.83–85, 133.62–64.

<sup>21</sup> Nik. Chon., 120.90.

<sup>22</sup> Nik. Chon., 80.12.

<sup>23</sup> Nik. Chon., 127.70.

<sup>24</sup> Nik. Chon., 179.60.

Manuel, who wanted to campaign in foreign lands, had heard of Egypt's bountiful productivity, how extensive were the fields fertilized by the Nile, the giver of fruit and rich grain, where the plentiful harvest was measured by the cubit. He determined to set his left hand in the sea and his right hand in the rivers, to observe with his keen eyes and take into his hands the coveted blessings of Egypt which had been brought to his attention. These thoughts motivated him to leap over the lands under foot even while these were still deeply troubled, laid waste and put to the torch. Nor had they vanished or been rendered invisible, but, like the Hydra, they continually restored themselves; it was an ill-timed ambition that Manuel should vie with kings whose fame was great and whose domains had extended not only from sea to sea but also from the boundaries of the East to the Pillars of the West.<sup>25</sup>

The author's sceptical attitude to the emperor is here evident. It is ill-timed ambition (φιλοδοξία τις ἄκαιρος) that inspires Manuel to his immense military plans and makes him imitate the glorious rulers of the past. But already before the author explicitly makes it clear for the readers at the end of the passage, Niketas has shown his attitude by employing sublime expressions, high-style words and allusions to the highest authorities. Niketas for instance applies to the Nile the epithets καρποδότης καὶ εὐσταχὺς. Neither word has a long history in ancient Greek (καρποδότης as applied to the Nile was used by Gregory of Nazianzos) but the compounds have a certain Homeric resonance. To describe the grandeur of Manuel's military plans Niketas uses the wording from Psalm 88.26 ('I will set his left hand also in the sea and his right hand also in the rivers'); Manuel is therefore implicitly likened to David. Two quotations from Psalms in this passage do not prevent the historian from referring to the mythological Hydra. It is just this eclectic mixture that creates a comic effect which is based on the contradiction between Manuel's cosmic pretensions and the paltry motives for his actions.

The use of high-style vocabulary, and in particular Homeric vocabulary,<sup>26</sup> with references to mythological and classical examples and even to the Holy Scriptures is a method very frequently employed by Niketas to produce an ironic effect. Let me take one further example. Roger of Sicily conquers Corinth. The reaction of Manuel is described as follows:

<sup>25</sup> Nik. Chon., 159.18–160.29; translation: H.J. Magoulias, *O Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984), 91.

<sup>26</sup> R. Maisano noticed that there are many cases of 'totale decontestualizzazione' of Homeric quotations in Choniates' *History* (R. Maisano, 'I poemi omerici nell'opera storica di Niceta Coniata', in F. Montanari and S. Pittaluga, edd., *Posthomerica II. Tradizioni omeriche dall'Antichità al Rinascimento* [Genoa, 2000], 41–53).

These events, reverberating in his ears, distressed Emperor Manuel and much like Homer's Zeus, or like Themistokles, son of Neokles, who was always observed in deep thought and watchful through sleepless nights, he pondered in his heart what must be done; and to those who made inquiries he answered that Miltiades did not win the trophy by sleeping.<sup>27</sup>

To be sure, Niketas does not mock openly at Manuel, but four references to Homer and one to Plutarch in a short passage of five lines cannot be understood as aiming at the glorification of the emperor, the more so as the latter is represented here not as a victorious leader but as an emperor who has just learned about the defeat of his army.

If we found such wording in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, we would have no doubt: the author is absolutely serious and totally devoid of a sense of humour. The numerous citations from Homer and Bible are used by Anna in a direct way in order to elevate and praise her characters.<sup>28</sup> Anna was a great writer but the text of her *Alexiad* is as it were one-dimensional in contrast to Niketas' *History*, whose text often has two or more levels as I have tried to demonstrate above.

To sum up, it is hardly possible to give any general recommendations on how to read Byzantine texts. Different kinds of texts should be read differently and every approach, as I mentioned above, can be justified. But at the same time it is of importance to stress that at least some pieces of Byzantine literature moved beyond the conventions imposed by the formal, rhetorical elements derived from the process of education. They are to be evaluated as artistic works and should be read as multi-dimensional texts with overtones, and these overtones can often be the most significant element of the composition.

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<sup>27</sup> Nik. Chon., 76.1–5.

<sup>28</sup> J. Ljubarskij, 'Why is the *Alexiad* a masterpiece of Byzantine literature?', in *Leimon: studies presented to Lennart Rydén* (Uppsala, 1999), 127–42.



## 9. Praise and persuasion: argumentation and audience response in epideictic oratory

Ruth Webb

Of the three rhetorical genres, epideictic – or panegyric – oratory is, on the surface, the least concerned with the art of persuasion. Since antiquity, its rise under the empire has been associated with the loss of any real political arenas in which the elites could flex their rhetorical muscle, and with a culture of flattery and display. Consequently, epideictic has tended to be seen as closer to literature than to the manly pursuits of deliberative or judicial oratory. I will suggest that epideictic involved a fair amount of persuasion, setting in play techniques of argumentation and proof that were shared with the other rhetorical genres that continued to be taught up to the sixth century and beyond. In this I am developing points made by Laurent Pernot in his magisterial study of epideictic from Classical Athens to late antiquity.<sup>1</sup> I will take some brief examples from speeches of the sixth century to illustrate my argument that epideictic is a dynamic medium which aimed to effect some change in the audience's understanding of the subject.<sup>2</sup> But my concern here is not so much the interpretation of individual speeches as the general nature and practice of epideictic, particularly in late antiquity. In particular, I would like to explore the role of epideictic as part of a wider rhetorical practice, placing it firmly within the study of rhetoric in late antiquity.

Epideictic does not, it is true, seek to convince an audience of particular facts, nor does it aim primarily at influencing action. Instead it deals mainly with subjects that are generally agreed to be good or bad, praising the former and (more rarely) criticizing the latter. In so doing it both represents and reinforces values, as has often been noted.<sup>3</sup> What I am particularly interested in here is the question of audience response, the psychological effect of a formal speech of praise on its listeners, and in persuasion as the creation of a shift in the audience's feelings about or perception of the

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<sup>1</sup> L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain* (Paris, 1993); see especially 659–724.

<sup>2</sup> For a range of individual examples see the essays collected in M. Whitby, ed., *The Propaganda of Power: the role of panegyric in late antiquity* (Leiden, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 720–22; G.A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, 1994), 61–2.

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topic. This is the task that Chaim Perelman attributes to rhetoric as a whole when he points out that its aim has always been to 'win the adherence of minds to the theses which are presented for them to accept'.<sup>4</sup> Perelman argues that rhetorical argumentation of all types aims at a shift in the audience's perspective, rather than at the type of conclusive demonstration that is the domain of dialectic, or science. He thus points the way towards an understanding of rhetorical persuasion that can easily encompass epideictic, as he himself points out.

Perelman's insight into the fundamentally rhetorical nature of epideictic balances the more usual perception of it as an anomalous type of rhetoric. This assumption derives partly from Aristotle's neglect of epideictic in favour of deliberative and forensic oratory and partly from the way in which he characterizes the audience of epideictic, attributing to them a role that is different from that of the audience of other types of speech. At *Rhetoric* 1.3.2, Aristotle states that the audiences of deliberative and forensic oratory are called upon to make judgements (*krinein*) concerning what should be done in the future (in the case of deliberative speeches in the assembly) or what has happened in the past (in the case of forensic speeches in the courtroom). These two genres therefore have an important function, that of judgement, in common. But the audience of epideictic is described in completely different terms. For while the audience of the first two genres are judges (*kritai*), the audience of epideictic is made up of 'spectators' (*theoroi*, expressed as 'mere spectators' in the Loeb translation).<sup>5</sup> I mention Aristotle primarily because his work has been central to modern understandings of rhetoric, particularly the idea that the audience of epideictic act only as dazzled spectators of the speaker's skill. His own concept of *theoria* may not in fact have been as distant from the idea of judgement as the Loeb translator implies, as Christine Oravec has argued.<sup>6</sup> But his words can be used to support the idea that epideictic is first and foremost a display of skill on the part of the speaker, as suggested by the English translation of epideictic as 'display' oratory. Roland Barthes, for example, in his idiosyncratic survey of classical rhetoric published in 1970, associates the emphasis on display that was typical of Second Sophistic oratory with a 'literary aesthetic' and with the loss of any persuasive

<sup>4</sup> C. Perelman, *L'empire rhétorique: rhétorique et argumentation* (Paris, 1977), 9–10. On Perelman's contribution to the theory of rhetoric see D. Cohen, 'Classical rhetoric and modern theories of discourse' in I. Worthington, ed., *Persuasion: Greek rhetoric in action* (London, 1994), 69–82.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1.3.3. On Aristotle's treatment of epideictic see Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 28–30.

<sup>6</sup> C. Oravec, "'Observation" in Aristotle's theory of epideictic', *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 9 (1976), 162–74.

function, resulting, he claims, in a breakdown of rhetorical structure.<sup>7</sup>

It is easy to see the attraction for a critic like Barthes of this definition of Sophistic epideictic as a language referring only to itself. But his assessment is one that would have puzzled at least one of the foremost representatives of the Second Sophistic and models for late antique and Byzantine orators, Aelius Aristeides. In his speech 'Against those who burlesque the mysteries [of oratory]' (Or. 34), in which he lambasts certain rivals who stoop to cheap tricks to please their audiences, Aristeides constantly refers to his own type of oratory as 'persuasive'.<sup>8</sup> This claim, it is true, seems strange to us. The corpus of Aristeides' works that we have inherited includes examples of encomia of cities, monodies for people and cities (both typical epideictic genres), a couple of politically oriented speeches exhorting the Greek cities to work with, rather than against, each other, and declamations: the mock judicial speeches on historical topics that were originally a training for courtroom oratory but became a performance art in their own right. We could put Aristeides' claim about his own work down to the needs of invective, and the need in particular to find a reason to distinguish himself from the rivals he terms, ironically, 'sophists'. But it may also point to the way in which he really understood his work.

By Aristeides' time the scope of epideictic had expanded far beyond the basic definition of speeches of praise (*epainos*) and blame (*psogos*) envisaged by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* (1.3.3). The range of speeches which fell under this heading by the third century is shown in the treatises attributed to Menander Rhetor.<sup>9</sup> The types of speeches described by Menander set in play different relationships between speaker, audience and subject, and some of them do aim at various forms of persuasion, urging their addressees to act in certain ways, or overtly arguing the benefits of a certain state of affairs. The invitation speech (*kletikos logos*) requesting a visit from the governor, for example, advertises the charms of the city; most notably the ambassador's speech (*presbeutikos logos*) makes use of praise and lamentation to request aid from an emperor after an earthquake.<sup>10</sup> Wedding speeches do not take the good of marriage for granted, but

<sup>7</sup> R. Barthes, 'L'ancienne rhétorique', *Communications* 16 (1970), 183: 'le discours étant sans but persuasif mais purement ostentatoire, se déstructure, s'atomise en une suite lâche de morceaux brillants, juxtaposés selon un modèle rhapsodique' (my italics). On Barthes' study of rhetoric see Cohen, 'Classical rhetoric and modern theories'.

<sup>8</sup> Aristeides, Speech 34 in *Opera*, vol 2, ed. B. Keil (Berlin, 1898), 237-52. See especially sections 17-19, 26, 33.

<sup>9</sup> Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, ed. and trans. D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson (Oxford, 1981). On the development of epideictic in the imperial period see Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 55-111.

<sup>10</sup> Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, 423.6-424.2.

include a *thesis*, a developed argument setting out its benefits.<sup>11</sup> At a later stage in the ceremony, the speaker outside the bedroom door urges the poor groom to do justice to his family and his community in the coming night in the *kateunastikos logos*, which Menander defines as 'an exhortation to intercourse'.<sup>12</sup>

These are all examples of speeches where the theoretical aim is to affect some future decision or action. In practice, the governor's visit or the groom's performance may be dictated by entirely different considerations, but this does not detract from the speaker's duty to speak in a persuasive manner. Indeed, as Pernot has pointed out, epideictic speeches which do not aim at any future outcome, but which aim to praise their subject, also use techniques of argumentation. It is not sufficient to simply state the qualities of the subject, as the ninth-century rhetorician Ioannes Sardianos points out. In his commentary on Aphthonios' treatment of the elementary exercise of encomium in his *Progymnasmata*, Sardianos notes that encomium requires exposition (*ekthesis*), which makes those qualities apparent to the audience (*emphasis*).<sup>13</sup>

Epideictic therefore requires reasoned argumentation to demonstrate that the subject is indeed worthy of praise. One technique which epideictic orators often use and which was also taught through the *progymnasmata* was the use of comparison (*synkrisis*). This can be likened to a form of rhetorical syllogism in which one takes a model universally recognized for a certain quality and then, by demonstrating that one's subject surpasses him or her, establishes that one's subject is in fact the supreme model. To take one example, Prokopios of Gaza's panegyric of Anastasios I, pronounced in front of the emperor's statue, uses a comparison with Aristeides the Just to argue that, in his abolition of the onerous *chrysargyron*, Anastasios surpasses the ancient Athenian in generosity.<sup>14</sup> If Aristeides gained his reputation for aiding just one poor farmer, Prokopios argues, how much the more should Anastasios be admired for having benefited the whole empire.

This type of reasoning was at the heart of rhetorical argumentation as defined by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*. But an argument like that of Prokopios, which serves to emphasize the qualities of his subject, is only fully effective if those qualities have been established by the orator in the first place. To this end, the technical vocabulary of proof, more usually associated with

<sup>11</sup> Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, 400.29–402.20. See also, ps.-Dionysios of Halikarnassos, *Art of Rhetoric*, in Dionysios of Halikarnassos, *Opuscula*, ed. H. Usener and L. Radermacher, vol. 2 (1929), 260–66. Translation in Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, 365–8.

<sup>12</sup> Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, 405.15–412.2.

<sup>13</sup> Sardianos, *Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1928), 116.17–20.

<sup>14</sup> A. Chauvot, trans. and comm., *Procopé de Gaze, Priscien de Césarée, Panégyriques de l'empereur Anastase Ier* (Bonn, 1986), 14. Chauvot (p. 97) suggests a date of 502.

the courtroom, is pervasive in speeches of praise. In particular, the achievements of the *laudandus* are presented explicitly as signs or as proofs of his qualities. For example, the encomium of the *magister militum*, Summus, by Prokopios' student, Chorikios, presents the subject's second term of office as *dux Palestinae* as a demonstration (*deigma*) of his ability. The passage as whole positively bristles with the vocabulary of proof: the second term of office is proof (*tekmerion*) of the qualities of his first, the first is a sign (*semeion*) of his previous life.<sup>15</sup>

Despite Menander's claim in his discussion of the *basilikos logos* that the person of the emperor was too great for there to be any place for 'ambivalent or disputed features', speeches in praise of emperors do display the same concern to produce evidence for their claims for the emperor's virtues, again using the language of forensic demonstration.<sup>16</sup> Prokopios of Gaza refers to Anastasios' victories in battle, which he describes, as demonstrations (*deigmata*) of his excellence.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the army is a witness (*martys*) to these.<sup>18</sup> In a particularly significant phrase he describes the emperor's abolition of the *chrysargyron* as an occasion for the display, or demonstration, of his virtue. The significance lies in the use of the verb *epideiknumi* of the emperor's action, which underlines the idea of demonstration, as well as display, implicit in the very name of the *epideiktikon genos*.<sup>19</sup> The epideictic speech serves to point out the meaning of the emperor's own *epideixis* of his qualities.

These examples can be paralleled in other epideictic speeches, showing that the encomiast was almost as concerned with the science of signs as the forensic orator was. It was obviously insufficient for the prosecutor simply to say that the defendant did or did not commit the crime, instead he had to argue on the basis of signs and probabilities that he was guilty, as we see in examples of mock forensic declamations where the facts are at issue (a type of issue known technically as *stochasmos*, 'conjecture').<sup>20</sup> The literature

<sup>15</sup> Chorikios, *Encomium of Summus*, 3, in *Opera*, ed. R. Foerster and E. Richtsteig (Leipzig, 1929), 70.13–23. On Summus see J.R. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 2, A.D. 395–527 (Cambridge, 1980), 1038–9. The speech is datable to the late 530s. I have argued elsewhere that Prokopios' account of Justinian's building programme in the *Buildings* serves a similar purpose. See R. Webb, 'Ekphrasis, amplification and persuasion in Prokopios' *Buildings*', *Antiquité Tardive* 8 (2000), 67–71.

<sup>16</sup> Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic*, 368.5–7.

<sup>17</sup> *Panegyric of Anastasius I*, 11 (p. 14.11).

<sup>18</sup> *Panegyric of Anastasius I*, 7 (p. 11.9).

<sup>19</sup> *Panegyric of Anastasius I*, 14 (p. 16.18). See Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 36–7 on ancient interpretations of the term *epideiktikos*. Pernot notes that ancient scholiasts emphasised the connection with the verb *epideiknumi* in the sense of 'demonstration' [of the qualities of the subject].

<sup>20</sup> The terminology is that of the second-century rhetorician Hermogenes, whose treatise *Peri Staseon* (*On Issues*) became the standard textbook on declamation in Byzantine schools. See M. Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues: strategies of argument in later Greek rhetoric* (Oxford, 1995).

on epideictic, illuminating as it is, is tiny compared to the quantity of handbooks and commentaries devoted to these declamations: speeches on scenarios involving fictional characters or using historical characters, often involved in not entirely historical situations.<sup>21</sup> Declamation was a highly technical art, as the surviving handbooks show, teaching the art of analysing a case to discern where the question lay, and proposing an array of strategies of argumentation and presentation to be used according to the case in question. The laws and stories involved may have been imaginary, often apparently trivial, but the intellectual and cultural training was a serious one. Even the most poetically inclined rhetor of late antiquity, like Himerios, had worked his way through this training. Libanios taught and practised declamation as did Chorikios and his teacher, Prokopios of Gaza. This is the intellectual background in which the panegyricists, and at least part of their audience, were steeped and it formed an essential preparation for the art of epideictic oratory.

Declamations taught the importance of signs and their interpretation. In one case treated in two Latin declamations attributed to Quintilian a blind young man is accused of parricide after his father is found stabbed to death with a trail of bloody handprints leading to the boy's room.<sup>22</sup> The signs point to the boy, whom the speaker has to defend. In a Greek theme, another young man is accused of plotting to install a tyranny after he is seen looking toward the acropolis and sighing, an action which is taken as a sign of his intent.<sup>23</sup> This last example also underlines the intimate connection between a character and his actions which underlies both forensic oratory and epideictic. That actions were a sign of moral choice (*proairesis*) and therefore of character (*ethos*) was established by Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, 3.16.8). Deeds in encomia of persons are no exception: they are selected as indications of the subject's inclination. These features of epideictic reveal the extent to which it was an integral part of a wider rhetorical culture and emphasize the relevance of rhetorical training as a whole to our understanding of epideictic. The importance of signs and their interpretation and the use of significant actions as indications of unseen qualities were techniques taught through declamation, represented by the Hermogenean corpus and other works which were used throughout Late Antiquity and in Byzantine education.

The question remains concerning the end of this persuasion within epideictic, of its effect on the minds of the audience. The messages conveyed by such argumentation are usually predictable, but this does not

<sup>21</sup> See D.A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge, 1983); Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues*.

<sup>22</sup> Ps.-Quintilian, *Major Declamations*, ed. L. Håkanson (Leipzig, 1982), I and II. Libanios treated a version of this theme in his 49th Declamation, but handled it very differently. However, as this example shows, many non-historical themes were shared in common between Greek and Latin declamation schools.

<sup>23</sup> Hermogenes, *Peri Staseon*, 49. See Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues*, 39.

prevent them from having a social function, reminding the audience of values, and the *laudandus* of the ideal he is to live up to, as has often been noted in studies of epideictic.<sup>24</sup> It is for this very reason that Perelman treats epideictic as central to the definition of rhetoric as creating adherence to values, a mission which he sees as key to rhetoric of all types.<sup>25</sup> Perelman is not writing as a historian of rhetoric, and seeks instead to promote a definition of rhetoric as a form of communication with much broader application than the ancient notion of *technē rhetorikē*. But his approach does help to suggest ways of reintegrating epideictic into the wider rhetorical field, here through an emphasis on the impact of speech on the listener. In the case of epideictic, the aim of the speech is a subtle one, to 'intensify' existing ideas, rather than to create new knowledge or a new understanding of a situation (as the forensic orator seeks to do when arguing that events must have happened in a certain way).

Pernot cites two examples from the early empire which may give some clue as to the precise nature of an audience's response to praise. First of all, in the introduction to Plutarch's dialogue *On the Cleverness of Animals*, one of the speakers expresses the fear that an encomium of hunting might fill the young men who hear it with such enthusiasm for the hunt that they neglect everything else.<sup>26</sup> The young men are described as already 'huntloving' so that the speech incites not a change in orientation, but an intensification of an existing disposition. Secondly, in one of his letters, Pliny the Younger discusses a speech he wrote for the dedication of a library he himself presented to the town of Comum (at a cost of one million sesterces plus a hundred thousand for maintenance).<sup>27</sup> He notes the utility of this exercise of composing self-praise: 'Nothing could have been more valuable to me than to set out the reasons for my generosity. I was therefore enabled first to dwell on noble sentiments, then to discern their virtue by prolonged reflection, and so finally to avoid the regret that follows on an impulsive act of generosity. I also learned to value money less'.<sup>28</sup> So the very act of writing the speech and of dwelling on his act in relation to accepted values altered Pliny's perception and understanding of a benefaction that he had already undertaken. The speech did not change his course of action, but it confirmed the decision, just as Plutarch's

<sup>24</sup> Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 718.

<sup>25</sup> Perelman, *L'empire rhétorique*, 33: 'Or, pour nous, le genre épideictique est central, car son rôle est d'intensifier l'adhésion à des valeurs'.

<sup>26</sup> Plutarch, *Moralia*, 959B. Cited by Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 718.

<sup>27</sup> Pliny, *Letters*, I.8. Cited by Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 718. See A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny: a historical and social commentary* (Oxford, 1966), 103.

<sup>28</sup> Pliny, *Letters*, I.8.8 (translation from Loeb edition): 'Ac ... quid utilius fit quam munificentiae rationem etiam stilo prosequi? Per hoc enim adsequebatur, primum ut honestis cogitationibus immoraremur, deinde ut pueritiam illarum longiore tractatu pervideremus, postremo ut subitae largitionis comitem paenitentiam caveremus. Nascebatur ex his exercitatio quaedam contemnendae pecuniae'.

fictional young men, who are described as 'loving the hunt' would simply have their existing interest intensified and confirmed.

There is another way in which Pliny's experience may be more directly relevant to the audiences of the *basilikoi logoi*. Pliny's act of auto-persuasion reveals the triumph of one mental disposition (pleasure at a benefaction well performed) over another (regret for the lost expenditure). The doubts about his generosity, which clearly existed in his mind before being dispelled by his exercise in self-praise, correspond to the varieties of knowledge and opinion that must have existed among the audience of any speech and even within individual listeners. I agree with Pernot and others that it is usually inappropriate to look for veiled expressions of dissent in the speeches themselves.<sup>29</sup> But dissent, and knowledge of the less glorious aspects of the subject, certainly existed outside the speeches, in the general knowledge of the audience and in individual opinion. Historical commentaries point out the less illustrious facts of the emperors' reigns such as the internal unrest, the ruler's failures to live up to the ideals expressed in the speeches, the negative interpretations of his reign, which are naturally omitted from the speeches, but would have been all too familiar to audiences.<sup>30</sup> This was the wider background against which the epideictic orator struggled to ensure that one view prevailed, and that his audience were given reason to assent, if only temporarily, to this view. The range of knowledge and opinion that the orator had to contend with can be glimpsed in other surviving texts.<sup>31</sup> The most obvious example of this range of opinion is provided by setting Prokopios of Caesarea's laudatory work, *Buildings*, so concerned with establishing visible signs of Justinian's wisdom and forethought, against the same author's presentation of the alternative view in the *Secret History*. We should also not forget the ephemeral expressions of dissent, in the form of *libelli* and graffiti, that were displayed in late antique cities, despite official attempts to suppress them.<sup>32</sup>

The epideictic orator was not therefore simply stating the obvious, but was selecting evidence for a certain interpretation of events from a

<sup>29</sup> Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 723. See most recently Michael Whitby, 'Pride and prejudice in Procopius' *Buildings*', *Antiquité Tardive* 8 (2000), 59–66, a response to the reading of P. Rousseau, 'Procopius' *Buildings* and Justinian's pride', *Byzantion* 68 (1998), 212–30.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Chauvot's commentary on Prokopios of Gaza's encomium of Anastasios and, on Herakleios, Mary Whitby, 'Defender of the Cross: George of Pisidia on Heraclius and his deputies', in Whitby, ed., *The Propaganda of Power*, 247–73.

<sup>31</sup> Averil Cameron, 'Early Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*: two case histories' *BMGS* 3 (1977), 1–17 emphasizes the range of opinion, and its interaction with literary form, shown in sources for the reigns of Justin II and Tiberius II.

<sup>32</sup> On the public posting of unofficial criticism of the emperor and others see M. Gleason, 'Festive satire: Julian's *Misopogon* and the New Year at Antioch', *JRS* 24 (1993), 106–19. For fourth- and early fifth-century attempts to control *libelli* see *Cod. Theod.* 9.34. I am grateful to Susanna Elm for these references.

multifarious reality which could be subject to competing interpretations. Here again, it is helpful to see epideictic against a wider rhetorical background. In a judicial or deliberative context it is clear that every argument has its opposite: for every speech of accusation there is a defence, for every proposal there is a counter-proposal. In the rhetorical schools this was made abundantly clear by the training offered. Not only were declamations competitive, with students arguing cases against each other, but even at the level of the elementary exercises, the *progymnasmata*, the same individual would be expected to argue that a certain story was likely one day and argue the opposite the next. (Aphthonios successively confirms and refutes the story of Daphne in his model exercises, Libanios argues for and against the story that Locrian Ajax raped Cassandra in his.)<sup>33</sup> Moreover, they were taught that the encomium may also have a counter-argument in the form of *psogos*, blame, and they carried out the same procedure on safely distant historical or mythical characters, sometimes subjecting the same figure to both praise and blame.

It has been noted that the symmetry of encomium and *psogos* in these elementary exercises is not reflected in adult rhetoric, where blame, or vituperation, is disappointingly rare.<sup>34</sup> (I say 'disappointingly' because it has the potential to be so much more entertaining as Prokopios of Caesarea shows.) But I would suggest that the possibilities for *psogos* were always present in virtual form in the knowledge of both audience and speaker. It is this unspoken other side of encomium that the encomiast has to argue against, and mere statement would not be enough, he needs to demonstrate, to show his reasons.

From this perspective, the epideictic orator has a role which is as dynamic as that of the forensic or deliberative orator. He starts from accepted values and has the task of demonstrating the ways in which his subject matches those values, selecting from a complex and ambiguous reality. Moreover, like the forensic orator, he needs to establish his own authority, evidence of his education, his knowledge of what it is customary to say in these ritual situations. The aim is not action, nor necessarily conviction, but a change in mental orientation in the audience, akin to the 'adherence' identified by Perelman. The epideictic orator's task was to pick out a single clear line of praiseworthy actions and qualities and to make them clear and acceptable to his audience, making these features win out, if only temporarily, against the multifarious range of existing opinion, interpretation and knowledge of events. His task is far more challenging than a definition of epideictic as either 'display' or 'praise' could possibly suggest.

<sup>33</sup> *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. H. Rabe (Leipzig, 1926), 10–16; Libanios, *Opera*, ed. R. Foerster (Leipzig, 1903–27), 8.123–35 and 150–4. See further R. Webb, 'The *Progymnasmata* as practice' in Y.L. Too, ed., *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Leiden, 2001), 289–316.

<sup>34</sup> Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, 491–3.





## 10. The role of vocabulary in Byzantine rhetoric as a stylistic device

Erich Trapp

When invited to a symposium I feel increasingly obliged to start my paper with a *captatio benevolentiae* towards the organizers as well as towards the audience, for not complying fully with the proposed theme, but slightly changing it in order to combine it with my prevailing lexicographical interest<sup>1</sup> Thus, having been asked by our συμποσιάρχισσα to deal with rhetoric and aesthetics, I tried once again to find a way out. Nevertheless, I hope to present to you some new details which might be of some use for our better understanding of medieval Greek language and literature and which will be of relevance to the overall theme of the rhetorical aspects of that literature.

Given the undoubted, although sometimes overestimated, separation between Atticizing literature on the one hand, and the tendencies toward some kind of Byzantine *koine* on the other, we could perhaps be surprised when meeting pure vernacular words in products of a high-flown style. If we begin with historians, we may decide that the main reason for doing this could be simply a practical one. As Herbert Hunger has pointed out,<sup>2</sup> several largely Atticizing authors, like Anna Komnene or George Pachymeres, do not refrain from inserting *termini technici* which are of foreign origin but which are generally used in colloquial speech; for example, βαίτουλος, καβαλλάριος, καδδηνάλιος, ποτεστάτος, and so on. Looking for ancient examples, we might perhaps draw comparisons with the Persian terms which occur in Herodotos and Xenophon, or later the many Latin ones found in Plutarch, Dio Cassius and so on.

Apart from these mainly practical reasons for Atticizing writers to use current official terms in the interests of better comprehension, we may occasionally meet a philological interest in vernacular words, especially in Eustathios' commentaries on Homer. However, as all this does not seem to be primarily caused by stylistic ambition, we can pass on to much more relevant cases, which show either an emphatic-moralistic or an ironic-satiric motivation. As we shall see later, self-confident preachers like

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<sup>1</sup> E. Trapp et al, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität* (Vienna, 1994- ).

<sup>2</sup> *HPL*, vol. I, 407 and 452.

Theodore of Stoudios do not feel themselves bound to classical rules when coining new words, because they want to impress their audience with dramatic expressions, whether they derive from high- or low-style. To this category may be added the wish to offer a vivid description, which we find for instance in John Kananos' account of the siege of Constantinople or in the *Lives* of Maximos Kausokalybes in the form of speeches and remarks made by ordinary monks. Irony, again, proves to be an even stronger motive for the introduction of vernacular words or short sentences; here we shall later refer to John Katrares and Mazaris and the author of the pamphlet against Kattablattas.

However, as the subject of our symposium is rhetoric, which is mainly opposed to any non-Atticizing tendency, let us now turn towards genuine Byzantine orators and begin with Nikephoros Basilakes,<sup>3</sup> whose vocabulary shows features of a rather bombastic speech and who boasted of his special style, τὸ Βασιλακίζειν. Similar derivatives of personal names, normally not coined by their bearers themselves, do point to adherents or imitators of philosophers (Ἀριστοτελίζω, Πλατωνίζω), of political or religious leaders (Ἀλεξανδρίζω, Βαρλααμίζω, Βογομιλίζω, Παλαμίζω), but also of writers (Διονίζω, Φιλωνίζω ['to imitate Dio Chrysostom', 'imitate Philo']). Although the term Βασιλακίζειν must be related to the last group, it is not yet quite clear what attributes it implied. But I think that we should partly think about vocabulary, that is to say his intention to enlarge the Atticizing tendencies of the Komnenian period. Let me take just one example: his predilection to use verbs with double prepositional prefixes, for instance compounds with the very productive προσαπο- and even more with προσεπι-. As far as we know today, about 190 new compounds of the latter kind were coined in the Byzantine era, more than ten percent of which (probably 22) first appeared in the works of Basilakes; for example: προσεπεντυφάω ('to delight in addition').

That in questions of contested authorship help can be obtained by comparing the use of rare words, may be demonstrated by just two simple cases: the anonymous so-called *Markiana Anekdotia* and an astrological poem, which in some manuscripts is assigned to Prodrornos.<sup>4</sup> Although there can be practically no doubt as to the authorship of Niketas Eugenianos and Constantine Manasses respectively, the common stock of rare words is able to corroborate the other evidence taken from manuscript tradition or stylistic parallels. Thus, for example, γοργογλωττία ('eloquence'), μακροκράσπεδος ('with broad border'), τρισαλάστωρ ('thrice

<sup>3</sup> A. Pignani, ed., *Progimnasmi e monodie* (Naples, 1983); A. Garzya, ed., *Orationes et Epistolae* (Leipzig, 1984).

<sup>4</sup> D. Chrestides, *Μαρκιανὰ ἀνέκδοτα* (Thessalonike, 1984). E. Miller, 'Poèmes astronomiques de Théodore Prodrome et de Jean Camatère', in *Notices et extraits* 23.2 (Paris, 1872), 1-39.

wretched') are uniquely characteristic of Eugenianos and ἀστερολέσχης ('astrologer'), γλαυκόφωτος ('with gleaming light'), μικροδύναμος ('with little power') and many others of Manasses.<sup>5</sup>

Let us now pass on to what I would like to describe as 'internal Byzantine *mimesis*', to be distinguished from the usual stylistic *mimesis* of ancient writers. Although at present I can give you only a very provisional perspective on the influence of style as proved by corresponding vocabulary, some observations seem to be conclusive for this phenomenon. First of all I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Niketas Choniates<sup>6</sup> apparently used unique words that he could have found in Eustathios' works: αἰγιδώδης ('similar to the aegis'), μόγημα ('labour'), πολύναυς ('with many ships'), στεγανότης ('impenetrability'), φανλοκόλαξ ('mean flatterer'), φιλαλέξιος ('loving Alexios') and others like συνθηματίζω ('give a signal') which survived in works by Theodore Hexapterygus and the patriarch Germanos II.

The fact that Anna Komnene's type of description<sup>7</sup> underwent the influence of Psellos' chronicle,<sup>8</sup> has been established long ago. Again this can be confirmed by their vocabulary, and not only by new words, possibly coined by Psellos and adopted by Anna, but also, as it seems, by the former acting as a guide to the latter in the use of rare Atticizing words. Both of these phenomena may be illustrated by some examples: βαρυμηνιάω ('to be exceedingly wrathful'), βαρυσίδηρος ('heavy with iron'), διακυβεύω ('to gamble away'), ἐμβόημα ('cry, exclamation'), λόχησις ('waylaying'), σισυροφόρος ('wearing a goatskin'), σισυροφορέω ('to wear a goatskin'). From all this we might gather, firstly that Anna was well acquainted with the works of Psellos, whom she sometimes imitated, and secondly that some authors of later antiquity, like Plutarch, seem to have influenced Psellos, who for his part became a model for Anna. And her work seems to have directly influenced later famous rhetoricians and historians: Michael Italikos and Niketas Choniates took up Anna's ἀπεριήγητος ('not to be described'), whereas George Pachymeres twice used the word διαμήνυσις ('message'), which first appears in the *Alexiad*. To this we could add more material, but let us conclude with αὐτοκρατορόθεν ('from the emperor'), to be quoted from Libadenos in the fourteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, of course, there are other instances where Anna's inclination towards obsolete or new expressions turns out to be so artificial that she did not have any followers. Again a few examples may illustrate this: ἀκροβαρής ('heavy from above'), apparently coined by analogy with

<sup>5</sup> O. Lampsidis, ed., *Constantini Manassis breviarium chronicum* (Athens, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> *History*: Niketas Choniates (ed. van Dieten); and I. van Dieten, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae* (Berlin, 1972).

<sup>7</sup> B. Leib, ed., *Anne Comnène, Alexiade* (Paris, 1937–45).

<sup>8</sup> S. Impellizzeri, ed., *Michele Psello, Imperatori di Bisanzia* (Turin, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> O. Lampsides, *Ἀνδρέου Λιβαδηνοῦ βίος καὶ ἔργα* (Athens, 1975).

κεντροβαρής; ἀνταναθρόσκω ('to rise again'), convincingly replaced by ἀνεγείρομαι in the anonymous metaphrasis of the fourteenth century;<sup>10</sup> ἐπανανήχομαι ('to swim back'); Καδμόθεν ('from Kadmos'); ξυλοκλασία ('wooden barrier'); προεκδρομή ('running out in advance'), said of troops and elsewhere attested only in Pollux; πεντόροφος ('of five floors'; compare Ludwig, *Anekdotia*).<sup>11</sup>

What about possible lexical links between Theophylaktos of Ochrid<sup>12</sup> and Eustathios? The following words in particular could point to such a relationship: ἀγαθοχυσία ('shedding of benefits'), ἐγκροαίνω ('spread oneself in'), κατάψησις ('caressing'; the meaning in an inscription of the third century BC is quite different: 'raking over'), οὐδαμινότης ('worthlessness'), πάνσπερμος ('of all sorts of seeds', perhaps via Zonaras), προσχίζω ('to cut before').

To give a provisional result, I think we can be sure that there was some kind of lexical-stylistic tradition that linked Psellos, Theophylaktos of Ochrid, Basilakes, Anna Komnene, Prodromos, Manasses, Eustathios, and which continued through to Niketas Choniates. Further studies, especially of authors of the epoch of the Komnenoi and Angeloi, will surely bring out even more connections.

Once it has been admitted that Atticizing authors not only imitated ancient models but were also influenced by recent ones, we should consider the Paleologan period too. Constraints of time and space limit us to just one example. It is well known that Theodore Metochites generally, but especially in his very artificial hexametric poems,<sup>13</sup> cultivated a personal kind of style, especially by coining new words. If we look now to see whether, despite his extravagance, he has any imitators, the only one who shows in his vocabulary some influence from his teacher seems to be his pupil Nikephoros Gregoras: γλωττοδαίδαλος ('with skilful tongue'), δοξοσοφέω ('pretending to be wise'), προανασοβέω ('to scare away').

Let us now deal with puns both on personal names and, to a lesser degree, on geographical terms. *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*,<sup>14</sup> a well known satire and late Byzantine imitation of Lucian which was composed between 1414 and 1415, gives us information on many contemporary persons,

<sup>10</sup> H. Hunger, *Anonyme Metaphrase zu Anna Komnene, Alexias XI–XIII* (Vienna, 1981).

<sup>11</sup> A. Ludwig, *Anekdotia zur griechischen Orthographie I–XIV*. Verz. d. Vorles. d. Univ. Königsberg 1905–12.

<sup>12</sup> Theophylaktos of Ochrid, PG 123–6; P. Gautier, ed., *Théophylacte d'Achrida, Lettres*, (Thessalonike, 1986); *idem*, *Theophylacti Achridensis orationes*, (Thessalonike, 1980).

<sup>13</sup> C. Müller and Th. Kiessling, ed., *Theodori Metochitae Miscellanea philosophica et historica* (Leipzig, 1821); I. Ševčenko and J. Featherstone, 'Two poems by Theodore Metochites', *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 26 (1981) 1–46; L. Mavromatis, *La fondation de l'empire serbe: le kralj Milutin* (Thessaloniki, 1978), 89–119: 'Théodore Métochite, Presbeutikos'.

<sup>14</sup> L. Westerinck and A. Smithies, trans., *Mazaris' Journey to Hades* (Arethusa Monographs 5; New York 1975).

whose names and professions, however, appear in a more or less disguised manner. Some can be identified quite easily, as is the case with Πῶλος 'Ἀργυρός ('Silver Colt') for Argyropoulos, Εὐμάραντος ('easily fading') for 'Αμάραντος, Χρυσοεγκέφαλος ('Goldbrain') instead of Χρυσοκέφαλος ('Goldhead') or Ὠκιμος for Βασιλικός. It is doubtful, however, whether Οἰνοφάγος ('Wine-eater') is a distortion of Φακρασῆς or merely stands for Οἰναιώτης. Let us pass on to professions: θετολόγος should stand for λογοθέτης, the *harpax* μολιβδοχαλκόχρως as an epithet for a certain Μαχητάρης, seems not to mean 'with lead-and-copper complexion', as it has been translated with reference to his outward appearance, but is much more likely a pun on his occupation as a notary of John VII Palaiologos, who used black and red ink.

Much more rare are puns on geographical terms. Some instructive examples may be drawn from the letters written by Theodore Laskaris.<sup>15</sup> In the last passage of Letter 179, addressed to George Mouzalon in which the emperor stresses their friendship, he mentions some persons, especially: ὁ Κρατερὸς καμυτίζει ἀληθεστάτως καὶ οὐ τζινεύει. As for the last expression, it seems to mean 'he doesn't kick', if we compare Philippos Monotropos' *Dioptra*,<sup>16</sup> line 64 ἵππος τζινιστής ('a kicking horse'), derived from the verb τζινῶ (Ancient Greek τινάσσω), although this cannot be quoted from texts earlier than the *Erotokritos*. More difficult is καμυτίζει. Perhaps we should understand this as a pun on Καμμύτης, since a person bearing this name appears in Letter 166. Thus it could simply mean 'Krateros most truly behaves like Kamytzes', but we should more probably imagine that Laskaris, being also aware of the etymology originating from καμύω (in medieval Greek also καμμύζω), had in mind 'Krateros most truly shuts the eyes or squints (like Kammytzes) and doesn't kick'. Furthermore, the depiction of this man differs essentially from a certain Paktiarēs, mentioned just before as having died ἵππεύων ταταρικῶς ('riding like a Tatar [without a saddle]'). And finally, as far as vocabulary is concerned in this letter, we come across a deliberate stylistic opposition to the opening (and afterwards repeated) expression ἀριστοκράτιστον πρᾶγμα ἡ ἀληθῆς φιλία; this pleonastic compound is used by the emperor also in his encomium on his father John II Doukas. The impression left by this letter, that Laskaris sometimes inserts colloquial terms while writing to his intimate friend Mouzalon, is even more evident in the following Letter 180. I summarize its content. The emperor, having carried out his obligations during the evening and the whole night, wanted to sleep, but suddenly there appeared several persons requesting an audience: the bishops of Achyraus and Ephesos, several Latins, one Argyropoulos and then ὁ Κότζης, whose name is the starting point for a pun οἱ κοτζίζειν βουλόμενοι πρὸς τὴν Νικαέων ('they who want

<sup>15</sup> N. Festa, ed., *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae* (Florence, 1898).

<sup>16</sup> Philippos Monotropos, *Ἡ Διόπτρα* (ed. S. Lauriotes, *Ho Athos* 1.1 [Athens, 1920]).

to limp to the town of the Nicaeans'), by using a word which can only be found in modern Pontic Greek. Apparently for sake of variation he concludes this letter with the following sentence expressing his ill-humour towards everyone except the addressee: ὁ ἔχων καὶ σήμερον πόδας ἵστασθαι κουτζευθήτω ταχύ, σὺ δέ, κάλλιστέ μου Μουζάλων, ἀπόλαυε ῥώσεως ('he who has feet to stand today, shall be lame immediately; you however, my best Mouzalon, enjoy strength'). Again, this parallel form κουτζεύω is only attested in modern dialects (Cyprus and South-Italy), the common form being κουτσαίνω.

Another letter to Mouzalon (No. 188) seems to have been written just for amusement, by using once more a broad spectrum of Greek style and vocabulary. Having sent two persons to his friend, he depicts them in vivid colours, using traditional rhetorical elements on the one hand, and quite colloquial terms on the other. Thus he introduces them in a perfectly stylistic and rhythmical form: τυροφόρος ('bringing cheese'), καὶ κρασοφόρος ('bringing wine'), ὁμοῦ δὲ κατάλληλοι· ζαρκουλάτος ('wearing a turban'), καὶ γραμματέμπορος ('travelling with letters'), ὁμοῦ δὲ οὐδείς and so on. In order to characterize these two γελοιασταί ('jesters'), Theodore brings forward high-style epithets, whether ancient or new: ὑπιβόας ('loud-shouter', the name of a frog in the *Batrachomyomachia*) along with ταπεινόφωνος ('humble-voiced', occurring elsewhere only in the nineteenth century), σεμνοπρεπής ('solemn-looking'), κερδωτικός ('wily', invented and used only by himself and occurring in other works of his), and so on.

In the letters of Theodore Laskaris there may be found a somewhat more frequent use of vernacular vocabulary than appears from the text edited by Festa, because in a few cases he banished such phrases to his apparatus criticus, by emending them to apparently correct words. Thus we read near the end of Letter 216 in the manuscript πρὸς τὸ Ἀχλαδερὸν κατουνεύσαντες ('camping at Achladeron'), wrongly corrected to κατανεύσαντες (perhaps to be understood as 'descending').

To sum up, we may say that Theodore Laskaris in his more private letters sometimes felt free from Atticistic prescriptions, and allowed himself to use vernacular words in order to bring about a vivid personal and humorous colour. This could partly be due both to his inclination towards the non-aristocratic classes of society and to his unstable moods. But on the other hand he proved to be such an independent and self-confident coiner of words that we could also find a sufficient explanation in his individual literary ambition. Thus we owe to him a quite unique collection of mostly new epithets of God,<sup>17</sup> which had only partly appeared before, like ἀστραποποιός ('maker of lightening', as a title of Zeus in an inscription of the Roman period), θυμοκράτωρ ('master of passion',

<sup>17</sup> Ch. Th. Krikonis, ed., *Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως Περὶ Χριστιανικῆς Θεολογίας Λόγοι* (Thessalonike, 1988).

referring to John Apokaukos). Sometimes he slightly altered existing words, for example, γιγαντοράϊστης ('destroyer of the giants', suggested by the profane γιγαντόραιστος, 'giant-quelling', in Lycophron's *Alexandra* used for Herakles' arrows), χιονοβλήτης ('he who drops snow'; cf. χιονόβλητοι ['snow-beaten'] Ὀλύμπου κορυφαί in Aristophanes' *Clouds*). In very rare cases he inspired later authors; for example, σθεναρόχειρ ('mighty-handed', which Holobolos uses with the noun αὐτοκράτωρ); ἀγαθάρχης ('author of goodness', that is, Symeon of Thessalonike) and occasionally he transgressed the common rules of composition: βλεπομενοζώδιος ('belonging to the visible zodiac'), ζωνοαφανοληγοτροπεύς (perhaps with the meaning 'he who turns the celestial zones invisible and waning'), ὑπερυπέροπλος ('overall-powerful'), etc.

Let us consider now what we may learn from this. Besides the quite natural fact that, like Theodore of Stoudios, Laskaris used his reading of earlier authors as well as a lexicon, he appears as a great coiner of words, not only in a traditional but quite frequently in an unconventional manner. In this respect he is not to be compared with any other secular writer from earlier periods who formed many new words, as did many writers of the Komnenian epoch — Basilakes, Prodromos, Manasses and so on. The only one who shares the emperor's highly individual and unconventional forging and using of new words to an even higher extent, seems to have been Theodore of Stoudios.<sup>18</sup>

But what about their stylistic motives? Are they somewhat similar? I do not think so. Theodore of Stoudios is a classic case of a militant preacher and teacher of faith, morality and monasticism, having always in view the spiritual welfare of his community. Theodore Laskaris on the other hand presents himself as a much more academic and subjective, less altruistic person, guided by his own kind of 'Christian humanism', coining his vocabulary not so much to convince others and be understood by them, as for the expression of his individual thoughts and moods, communicating only with his addressees.

If we now look for a genuine emulator of Theodore of Stoudios, it is the Cypriot Neophytos Enkleistos who should come into mind.<sup>19</sup> Both by his strong inclination towards preaching, which made him as great an author of homilies as his predecessor — at least as to quantity —, and by his similar preference for using new emphatic words in order to express clearly the paraenetic character of his sermons, he may be compared with Theodore. The following common characteristics can be stated. Firstly, both

<sup>18</sup> A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, ed., *Theodoros Studites, Megale Katechesis* (St Petersburg; 1904); J. Cozza-Luzi, ed., *Theodoros Studita, Catecheses Magnae* (Rome, 1888–1905); E. Auvray, ed., *Theodori Studitis parva catechesis* (Paris, 1891); G. Fatouros, ed., *Theodori Studitae Epistulae*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1992), see vol. 1, 126–8\*; P. Speck, ed., *Theodoros Studites, Jamben* (Berlin, 1968).

<sup>19</sup> I. Tsiknopoulos, 'Ο λεξιλογικός πλούτος τοῦ ἐγλείστου Νεοφύτου', *Κυπριακαὶ Σπουδαί* 20 (1956), 99–171.



Theodore and Neophytos are well trained in rhetoric: we come across alliterations, *anaphora*, etymological figures, *hyperbata*, *oxymora*, *parecheseis*, *polyphtota* and so on. Secondly, although very few words can be found which Neophytos could have borrowed from his precursor (for example, ἀρχαιοκτιστος ['created in ancient times'], θεοσύζευκτος ['fitted together by God'], προσγεύω ['make enjoy']), there does exist a similar intention to create a personal style. Thus Theodore, who had been very much moved by the Moechian Controversy, coined many derivatives of μοιχός, μοιχεία, μοιχεύω ('commit adultery') which are characterized by Fatouros as *Kraftwörter* (strong words): μοιχοελέγκτης, μοιχοσύνοδος, μοιχόφιλος ('lover of adulterers'), πρωτομοιχειανός and so on. This process could go as far as to abandon the rules of Atticism, which he normally used in his letters as well as in his homilies, apparently in order to be understood also by common people. Let me again quote some examples: μαρτυριομολογία ('confession'), πολυαναγνωστέω ('read much'), from Theodore of Stoudios; and two others taken from Neophytos: ἀνδροαγκάλισμα ('that which a man can embrace') and ἀνδροσήκωμα ('that which can a man lift'), these both unique neologisms giving a vivid picture of a huge stone.

Much could be said about bombastic vocabulary appearing in hagiography and homiletics, but as this would be tedious and would resemble the outpourings of Pandora's box rather than the Horn of Plenty, I shall confine myself to a few hints. As for homilies, especially in the late antique or early Byzantine period some authors excel in new vocabulary — like Asterios Sophistes, Hesychios and Chrysippos of Jerusalem, the presbyter Leontios of Constantinople and so on; all of these apparently aim at emphasizing in this way the effect of preaching to an audience. In this regard I may perhaps be permitted to underline once more the vast gaps in the Patristic lexicon, where many published texts have not been exploited adequately. And as far as hagiography is concerned, let me mention only the most impressive example, the *Life of Holy Samson*, the *xenodochos* in Constantinople during the reign of Justinian: with about twenty *hapax legomena* and just as many rare Byzantine words in not more than ten pages he would surely be worth entering in some hypothetical Byzantine *Guinness Book of Records*.

However, the most extreme case of exaggerated use of rhetorical vocabulary, leading to absurdity, can be found in the *Lives of the Holy Catherine of Alexandria*.<sup>20</sup> In order to surpass her highly educated eloquent adversary at the trial, she overwhelms him with a torrent of abstruse and only partly comprehensible words. Thus we learn of the epithet βιργίλιος, apparently not understood as the proper name of the famous Latin poet, but in the sense of 'wise' and combined with Ὀμηρος and Ἀριστοτέλης. As

<sup>20</sup> J. Viteau, *Passions des saints Ecaterine et Pierre d'Alexandrie, Barbara et Anysia* (Paris, 1897).

a kind of missing link we might turn to the expression Βεργίλλιος ὁ σοφός or σοφώτατος which we find several times in Malalas' chronicle. However, in the *Lives* we meet some strange derivatives: ἐκβιργίλιος, which we might treat as a separate form, except for the existence of σμιργίλιος, σφιρμιγγίλιος, σφιρμιγγιλιούρθμιστος, σμιργιλλιούμενος, σφιρμιγγιλιότροπος, σφιρμιγγιλιόδαπής, all of which, in my opinion, should be seen as somewhat corrupted compounds with βιργίλιος as their base. There are, of course, many other words, but I will restrict myself to quoting only two more: the first one λεπτοποίκιλος ('fine and artful') is quite clear, although not known from anywhere else, whereas the second one λεκτιφανῶς seems to remind us of Λεξιφάνης ('Phrase-monger, one who uses bombastic phraseology'), the title of a dialogue by Lucian, and thus fitting very well with the intention of ridiculing rhetoric which is pursued in the legendary *Lives of Catherine*.

As the first element of newly coined compounds ψευδο- became a more and more common stylistic device of Byzantine Greek in order to express harsh criticism against adversaries, not only in secular, but even more in theological writers. If we leave aside expressions like ψευδοθεοσεβέω, ψευδολατινοπατριάρχης, ψευδοοικουμενικός and more than a hundred others of this sort, let us content ourselves with two extreme examples which at the same time show an imitation very clearly. A certain Petros Patrikios addressed an epigram to the emperor Leo VI, containing the word σεμνοκομποψευδομυθοπλασία, which we may call a semi *hapax legomenon*.<sup>21</sup> There can be no doubt, in my opinion that Eustathios in his commentary on the hymns of John of Damascus was inspired by this and coined the following compound by slightly altering it: ψευδοσεμνοκομπομυθοπλασία ('false, solemn, boastful, fabulous forging').<sup>22</sup>

Let us now make a digression to South Italy. As far as language is concerned, we know, on the one hand, that there were some Doric elements which persisted from ancient to modern times, as well as a clear influence of Latin and Italian, manifest in medieval documents, but we also know on that Byzantine learned literature, written in prose and poetry in just the same way as in the capital Constantinople, continued to exist up to the thirteenth century at least. Thus, *hapax legomena* to be found in the 'Poeti bizantini di Terra d' Otranto',<sup>23</sup> like ἐρυθρολευκέω ('to be red and white') or ὀπλοτοξοπυρφόρος ('who carries a bow and fire as weapons'), could well have been influenced by Theodore Prodromos' ἐρυθρόλευκος ('red and white') and Niketas Eugenianos' ὀπλοτοξότης ('who has a bow as his

<sup>21</sup> A. Markopoulos, 'Επίγραμμα προς τιμὴν του Λέοντος ΣΤ' του Σοφού', *Symmeikta* 9.2 (1994), 33-40, at 34.

<sup>22</sup> PG 136: 716C.

<sup>23</sup> M. Gigante, ed., *Poeti bizantini di Terra d' Otranto nel secolo XIII* (Naples, 1979).

weapon', namely Eros) respectively,<sup>24</sup> both Constantinopolitan authors probably being regarded as models worthy of imitation. Yet there is one product of rhetorical hagiography which shows peculiar features as to vocabulary, and that is an encomium on Bartholemew the Younger of Grottaferrata, written by an anonymous author, apparently in the thirteenth century.<sup>25</sup> Apart from several compounds which, although unique, could have been coined by any Byzantine author like Manasses (ἁγιόχρυσος ['holy and golden'], βροντόκτυπος ['sounding like thunder'] and so on), there are others to be found, which more or less deviate from the ordinary linguistic rules; for example: ἐνθεόσοφος ('wise in God'), ἐρημόφιλος ('loving solitude'), κοσμοπανεύφημος ('much praised in the world'), and above all the Greek-Latin mixed compound κοσμόςσαλβος ('saving the world'). Considering this somewhat strange vocabulary, doubtless created by the intention to praise the saint in a rather unusual manner, one gets the strong feeling that the author's mother tongue was not Greek. And looking for a parallel, we may think of Dioskoros of Aphrodito, a Copt, who, in particular, composed several poems in Byzantine Egypt during the sixth century which have survived only in papyri.<sup>26</sup> A few examples may be sufficient to illustrate this: θαλασσιοπλοιοχρυσόγομος δεσπότης ('master of the golden cargoes, that go over the sea'), ὁλοκοττινοπερίπατε ἀγγελοπρόσωπε, translated by Fournet as 'dont le visage angélique circule sur les sous d'or', παντάδελφος ἰλαροφύια ('toute fraternelle grâce', or more literally 'entirely fraternal cheerful nature'. I think we may learn from both examples how an author who was not a native speaker managed to master the Greek language quite satisfactorily, but did not always feel bound by its usual linguistic rules when pushing to the limit his predilection for a bombastic panegyric style.

The next topic to be dealt with here might perhaps be considered a very simple one, but nevertheless I think it quite useful for our theme: the extent of using the verbal adjectives ending in -τέος / -τέον. It is unnecessary to stress the fact of their disappearing from the spoken language, which is well demonstrated, for example, by the metaphrasis of Anna mentioned earlier. But on the other hand we may consider their use by the Atticizing authors an instructive example, especially if since they occur rather excessively. The forms can be either quite complicated and artificial like Κερκυρωνυμητέον ('you must call Kerkyra', that is, instead of Korypho / Corfu), ἐπισκυκλητέον ('one has to include'; both these examples are taken from Theodore Prodromos), σκηνοπηγητέον ('one must pitch a tent';

<sup>24</sup> F. Conca, ed., *Nicetas Eugenianus, De Drosillae et Chariclis amoribus* (Amsterdam, 1990). M. Marcovich, ed., *Theodorus Prodromus, Rhodanthe et Dosicles* (Leipzig, 1992).

<sup>25</sup> G. Giovanelli, *S. Bartolomeo Juniore* (Grottaferrata, 1962).

<sup>26</sup> J.-L. Fournet, 'Un nouvel épithalame de Dioscore d'Aphrodité adressé à un gouverneur civil de Thébaïde', *L'antiquité tardive* 6 (1998), 65-82.

Michael Choniates) and χιονοφαγητέον ('one has to eat snow'; Euteknios), or in an accumulation, expressing a kind of emphasis. Perhaps the best passages to illustrate this may be found in Eustathios' narration of the capture of Thessalonike by the Latins.<sup>27</sup> Although the learned author shows a great preference for these forms in all his works, the most impressive passages are to be found near the beginning and almost at the end of this text. Let me quote from the latter section: προσλογιστέον ('one must reckon in addition'), συντακτέον ('one must add'), προσγραπτέον ('one must add in writing'), προσενθυμητέον ('one must consider further'), προσεπιλεκτέον ('one must say further', to be found only in Eustathios, here as well as in his commentary on the *Iliad*).

The predilection of Byzantine authors for hyperbolic expressions, used for honorary titles and in respectful address, is very well known. In this regard we should not divide the sources into literary and non-literary categories, but rather look at them as an all-embracing general form of rhetorical practice. A few extreme examples, taken from literary as well as from documentary sources and sigillography, may illustrate this phenomenon, which is due to linguistic inflation: μεγαλυπέροχος (which appears a dozen times from the mid-twelfth century onwards), ὑπερσέβαστος (Psellos), ἡ ὑπερευφημότης σου ('your illustriousness'; Theodore of Stoudios), ὑπερπερίλαμπρος (first in the eleventh century, then in Anna Komnene), πρωτοπανεντιμούπέρτατος (Michael Choniates), πρωτοπανσεβαστοῦπέρτατος (Demetrios Chomatenos, documents, seals), πανυπερπρωτοσεβαστοῦπέρτατος (Gregory, abbot of Oxeia, in the twelfth century).

Now a few words should be said about double forms of compounds. As we are now preparing the fifth fascicle of the *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, allow me to begin with the pair of μεγα- and μεγαλο-. In his hexameter poems Theodore Prodromos<sup>28</sup> shows a strong predilection for the poetic form, coining more than a dozen new words like μεγαεργός ('doing great things'), μεγάθρονος ('on a great throne'), μεγακρατής ('of great power'), μεγαλαμπής ('great shining') and so on, whereas in his other works he prefers the form in common use: μεγαλαλκής ('of great strength', this word being apparently taken up by Constantine Manasses), μεγαλοτολμητίας ('great bold man'), μεγαλοτροπαιοῦχος ('great victor') etc. Given this distinction between the hexameter poems and other works, it may be of greater interest to know that Niketas Choniates in his prose works, in his orations, his history and in his Θησαυρὸς ὀρθοδοξίας, that is, Πανοπλία δογματική, uses the archaistic poetic forms with μεγα-: starting with the Homeric μεγάθυμος, he uses the new Byzantine compounds μεγάδοξος ('very glorious') and μεγάπυργος ('with big towers', probably taken from Prodromos) as well as his own creations μεγαεπιφανέστατος (instead of the

<sup>27</sup> S. Kyriakidis, ed., *Eustazio di Tessalonica, La espugnazione di Tessalonica* (Palermo, 1961).

<sup>28</sup> W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974).

common Byzantine μεγαλεπιφανέστατος with the meaning of the Latin *illustrissimus*), μεγάπλευρος ('with big flanks'; this is found in an oration of Niketas, whereas a scholion on Pindar as well as Constantine Manasses and Niketas in their histories have μεγαλόπλευρος) and μεγαποίμην, a paraphrase for 'patriarch', the last compound being repeated somewhat later by Nikolaos Mesarites, Alexios Apokaukos and Demetrios Chomatenos. Thus we can observe how Niketas, like ancient Greek prose authors, strove to enrich his vocabulary with poetic forms. Going on to another pair of compounds, it has to be stated that the development of μακρυ- instead of μακρο- as the first element (like μακρυδάκτυλος as opposed to μακροδάκτυλος) is exclusively limited to literature which is close to colloquial speech; but on the other hand, quite astonishingly, we can refer to numbers of examples of the parallel forms of the colloquial γλυκο- against the classical Greek γλυκυ-, a phenomenon which is employed by some well known authors, including John of Damascus, Theodore of Stoudios, Ignatios Diakonos, Constantine Manasses. Theodore Laskaris, too, in his Letter 141 has the commendatory words ἐστὶ καὶ ῥήτωρ, ῥήτωρ γλυκοεπής ('sweet speaking rhetorician'), ῥήτωρ εὐφραδέστατος and so on. Whereas in this case, in my opinion, one can see no special reason for avoiding the coinage of a correct Attic γλυκυεπής, sometimes it is much more difficult to decide whether an author uses a non-classical, perhaps colloquial, form deliberately or not. This seems to be the case with compounds whose second part consists in -πῶλος instead of -πώλης, meaning 'seller'. On the one hand it could have developed as a mere collateral, although rather rare, form like the far more frequent parallels of -άρχης and -άρχος: this suggestion is confirmed by the fact that even in lexicographical works we find κρεοπῶλος (Ludwich, *Anekdotai*), οἰνοπῶλος as well as προβατοπῶλος (Photios' lexicon and the *Etymologicum Gudianum*); but on the other hand, in at least two satiric products an intentional use of these quite un-Attic forms is likely, perhaps including a deprecating effect with regard to -πῶλος for the diminutive ending -πουλος. If the presumed author of the so called comedy of Katablattas,<sup>29</sup> the learned John Argyropoulos, once speaks of an ἰχθυοπρατήρ ('fishmonger') in a quite Atticizing manner, it cannot be a simple stylistic variation if in other passages he writes κρεοταριχοπῶλος, τυροπῶλος and ὠοταριχοπῶλος ('seller of meat, caviar, cheese and eggs'). And the other satire to be referred to is the poem by John Katrares,<sup>30</sup> who has ἰχθυοπῶλος as well as ταριχοπῶλος.

Let me conclude this short *tour d'horizon* of the role of vocabulary in Byzantine rhetoric as a stylistic device, by quoting some monstrous

<sup>29</sup> P. Canivet and N. Oikonomidès, 'La comédie de Katablattas', *Diptycha* 3 (1982-3) 5-97.

<sup>30</sup> Ioannes Katrares, ed. I. Dujcev, *Proucvanija vurchu bulgarskoto srednovekovie* (Sofia, 1943), 130-50.

Byzantine compounds, partly formed in the manner of Aristophanes, and by trying to translate them. With respect to this unequalled ancient model — the longest word created by the comic poet at the end of his *Ekklesiastousai* contains not less than 169 letters and 79 syllables — let us first turn towards poetry. As the fifteen-syllable verse must have a caesura in the middle, it has to consist of at least two words. This is the case in verse 976 of Meliteniotes' poem on Sophrosyne,<sup>31</sup> which runs as follows: στρογγυλοσφαιροσύνθετος, οὐρανοκυκλοδρόμος ('round-shaped like a ball, running in a circle like heaven'). On the other hand the twelve-syllable verse exceptionally could be considered as an entity, as we see from the well-known satiric poem by Constantine the Rhodian against Leo Choirospaktes, where we find the *hapax legomenon* ἀλλαντοχορδοκοιλιεντεροπλύτης ('sausage-guts-tripes-bowels-washer'; not accurately translated in the *LBG* by the simple 'Innereienwäscher; washer of intestines') along with another fourteen lines each made up of just one word of twelve syllables. However, unlike the comedies of classical antiquity it is prose that produced the longest compounds in the Byzantine period. One of them is στρογγυλοφιλοσοφογραμματογράφος ('well rounded philosophic letter writer'), probably a pun on a certain Strongylos, who is known as an addressee of Theodore Laskaris (see his Letter 128). But the longest new compound I have come across during my long-standing lexicographical occupation is ἀκτινοχρυσοφαιδροβροντολαμπροεγγοφωτοστόλιστος ('clothed in rays, golden gleaming, like thunder, lighting with bright radiance'). This word is found twice in late Byzantine manuscripts, combined with ψαλτήρ and δελτίς ('book'), respectively (see *LBG*, s.v.).

I hope that these various, rather incomplete observations on the intentional use of new or rare vocabulary in Byzantine rhetoric may have some impact on further studies. And I am quite sure that our lexicon on Byzantine Greek, together with the expected further Byzantine expansion of the *TLG*, will be of great value for a deeper understanding of Byzantine literature. There can be no doubt that in the future we will be able not only to clear up by this twofold lexicological support questions of authorship and dating that remain problematic, but even more to reveal hitherto unknown stylistic trends of Byzantine *mimesis*: connections, dependencies, imitations and mutual influence.

<sup>31</sup> E. Miller, 'Poème allégorique de Méliténiote', *Notices et extraits* 19.2 (Paris, 1858).



## 11. Rhetoric, theory and the imperative of performance: Byzantium and now

Margaret Mullett

Donald Nicol once wrote that 'rhetoric was the canker in the cultural blood of the Byzantines',<sup>1</sup> by which he meant not only the besetting vice of writers, but also a defining feature of that literary culture, possibly that whole civilisation. The task laid upon me by the symposiarch was to examine ways in which rhetoric affects the use of current critical approaches in a medieval context. I here address this complex issue, while also interrogating the general brief of the symposium: the ways in which rhetoric functioned in Byzantine society. Indeed it will be necessary to do this in order to define rhetoric in a Byzantine context and to look at the functions of rhetoric in Byzantine society, before examining the proper relationship between theory and rhetoric for the modern reader of Byzantine texts.

My problem is concerned with the relationship of rhetoric to Byzantine literature. For scholars like George Kennedy, literature was the dominant partner in that relationship. Byzantine rhetoric has been 'literaturized', transformed in the process of *letteraturizzazione* into a dead, library-based written literature from the living streetwise oral art-form of classical oratory.<sup>2</sup> This is a view compatible with Nicol's but unrecognizable in a Byzantine context. In this paper my working definition of rhetoric will not be restricted to literature, though it is at least arguable that the best Byzantine Greek translation of 'literature' is *rhetorike techne*. Rather I see rhetoric as the screenplay — not the storyboard — for a fundamentally performative society, albeit a society officially without a drama.

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<sup>1</sup> D.M. Nicol, *The End of the Byzantine Empire* (London, 1979), 47.

<sup>2</sup> G.A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (London, 1980), 5. He does concede that Byzantine rhetoric, though static, preserved classical rhetoric as a living tradition for a thousand years and so might count in his terms as primary rather than secondary rhetoric, but there is no concept here either of what is Byzantine about Byzantine rhetoric or of change within the thousand years, or of the complexity of rhetoric's relationship with Byzantium.

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In view of the theatre of the liturgy in the great city basilicas of late antiquity,<sup>3</sup> a stage for episcopal preachers and candlelit *kontakia*, the overflowing of the court onto the streets and the spectacle of those streets, the reflection of epideictic in the aristocratic *oikoi* of the capitals and major cities, and the performance of panegyrics in the monasteries and cult sites of the empire, we might settle for this society without a drama. The relationship between ritual, ceremony, spectacle and rhetoric is complex, and perhaps one for another symposium. But in this heady mix rhetoric played a fundamental part, and at the heart of this lay new, orally performed rhetorical works. It was the *rhetors* who were responsible for the screenplay; we might almost ask 'who is rhetoric?' rather than 'what is rhetoric?'. In this light the rhetoric we should be most concerned with is not the treatises and commentaries and school-exercises of rhetoric as formation described by Charlotte Roueché,<sup>4</sup> or the applied rhetoric which surfaces in ripples of rhetorical theory in different genres of Byzantine writing, deftly identified by Martha Vinson<sup>5</sup> and others, but rhetoric in action, epideictic rhetoric performed, as persuasively as Ruth Webb argues,<sup>6</sup> by rhetors. All these are also forms of Byzantine rhetoric, but the theory, the exercises, the 'literaturized' applied rhetoric gained persuasiveness from a continuing social demand for rhetorical performance.

This is indicated by the large body of rhetorical speeches which have come down to us. It is at its richest in the twelfth century, and is found in many forms: *didaskaliai*, *epitaphioi*, *consolationes*, monodies, *threnoi*, *epithalamia*, *genethliaka*, inaugural lectures, *basilikoi logoi* as well as letters, *dramatia* and *progymnasmata* written for performance.<sup>7</sup> Paul Magdalino called the twelfth-century speeches to the emperor the equivalent of newspapers:<sup>8</sup> once a year was probably enough for those *rhetors*, for few sub-editors would polish their ephemera as elegantly as the simplest product of this milieu. But the major difference between the modern media and twelfth-century rhetoric is that all this material was designed for an occasional setting: in church or palace, *oikos*, school-room

<sup>3</sup> T.F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: architecture and liturgy* (University Park, PA, 1971).

<sup>4</sup> See above, 'The rhetoric of Kekaumenos'.

<sup>5</sup> See above, 'Rhetoric and writing strategies in the ninth century'.

<sup>6</sup> See above, 'Praise and persuasion: argumentation and audience response in epideictic oratory'.

<sup>7</sup> Hunger, *HPL*, vol. 1, 63–196; M.E. Mullett, 'Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople', in M.J. Angold, ed., *The Byzantine Aristocracy, IX–XIII Centuries* (Oxford, 1984), 173–201; B. Katsaros, *Ἰωάννης Κασταμονίτης: συμβολή στη μελέτη τοῦ βίου, τοῦ ἔργου, καὶ τῆς ἐποχῆς τοῦ* (Thessalonike, 1988); M. Loukaki, *Grégoire Antiochos: éloge du patriarche Basile Kamatèros* (Paris, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 21.

or street. The church required sermons, monastic cult sites required panegyric eulogies for their saints; these are the rhetorical contribution to liturgy. The palace (and the streets of the City) required acclamations, court poetry, *eisiterioi*, *prosphonetikoi*, *propemptika* and *syntaktika*; these are the rhetorical contribution to ceremony. The home required speeches to reflect the human life-cycle of birth, marriage and death: *genethliaka*, *epithalamia* and the system of death genres, the rhetorical contribution to ritual. *Rhetors* were trained in schools which required lectures, school texts, model *progymnasmata*, and schedographic exercises. And they demonstrated their skills as students at the end of the Epiphany *basilikos logos*,<sup>9</sup> in inaugural lectures, and in the *theatra* of the capital to which letters were sent, for which *literati* were commissioned by rich ladies to improvise on a theme, and *dramatia*, little dialogues, were performed: rhetoric here contributed to the spectacle of display.

If we look at the functions of twelfth-century rhetoric in this profoundly performative and residually oral society, we can see how far into the core of that society rhetoric penetrated. The fundamental function of rhetoric is two-way communication, a tool for the effective communication of ideas and ideologies. Rhetoric is often seen as an encoding system, person to person, as in communication theory,<sup>10</sup> but we forget at our peril that the text we have is divorced from its whole context.<sup>11</sup> There were hymns as well as sermons, in churches decorated with mosaics; there were processions for the translation of relics as well as *synaxaria* and *passiones* at cult sites with crypts or ambulatories. There was music at court and wall-painting as well as eloquence, weeping by the bier and funerary monuments as well as praise at the grave. Song, dance, acclamation, gesture, in an architectural space decorated by visual narrative complemented the remains of rhetoric that we have, whether it is screenplay or post-movie novelization,<sup>12</sup> for much must have been written up after the event.<sup>13</sup> In all this, rhetoric used words to convey a message, carefully crafted to get the right response, consummately skewed to create the right effect. Rhetorical genres are interactive: they are focused by the speaker on the recipient, and would be different if the recipient, or the occasion, were different.

<sup>9</sup> The *maistor ton rhetoron* handed over to his students at the end of the speech. See R. Macrides, 'Nomos and kanon, on paper and in court', in R. Morris, ed., *Church and People in Byzantium* (Birmingham, 1990), 70–71.

<sup>10</sup> W. Weaver, 'The mathematics of communication', *Scientific American* 181 (1949), 11–15.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. M. Mullett, 'Writing in early medieval Byzantium', in R. McKitterick, ed., *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990), 156–85 at 181–5.

<sup>12</sup> In the sense of novels written after the making of a film, not in Bakhtin's technical sense.

<sup>13</sup> This is a concern of various contributors to P. Allen and M.B. Cunningham, eds., *Preacher and Audience: studies in early Christian and Byzantine homiletics* (Leiden, 1998).

But they were also public, involving more than the fundamental binary relationship of speaker and *laudandus*: the social function of rhetoric is paramount. They also reflected everyday realities and human emotions: the idea of rhetoric as a barrier inhibiting the expression of everyday realities was long ago exploded by Alexander Kazhdan and particularly Paul Magdalino.<sup>14</sup> The everyday finds its place in a heightened sense in the cycle of the year and the indiction, the rhythms of birth, marriage and death, career advancement and state occasion. The late antique handbooks for rhetors like Menander's,<sup>15</sup> still used in the twelfth century, sometimes look like handbooks of etiquette, anything but a dry library exercise, since the rhetor's career depended on hitting the right note and dealing effectively with powerful emotion. And it is reasonable to conjecture that grand speeches delivered in imperial palaces found their equivalents in brief, less elaborate poems and speeches for lower levels of society<sup>16</sup> to celebrate births and marriages and mourn the dead.

Another social function of rhetoric in Byzantium is the socialization of the young male. In antiquity as recent studies have shown, the role of rhetorical training was to inculcate masculine deportment and create a sense of community in the élite male.<sup>17</sup> In Byzantium where career choices, even for the most military, regularly required speaking, the traditional rhetorical education had urgent contemporary utility, and so played its part in defining the gender system of Byzantium. Charlotte Roueché has shown that we underestimate at our peril the educational formation of the most apparently philistine of Byzantines.<sup>18</sup>

Rhetoric also played a special part in defining and articulating the self-referentially agonistic nature of Byzantine literary society.<sup>19</sup> Rhetorical controversy was the culture wars of the Komnenian period: the vogue for the new rhetoric of the Komnenian period, the new schedography, the inter-school competitions.<sup>20</sup> But the agonistic,

<sup>14</sup> P. Magdalino, 'The literary perception of everyday life in Byzantium', *BSI* 47 (1987), 28–38.

<sup>15</sup> D.A Russell and N.G Wilson, eds., *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford, 1981).

<sup>16</sup> An example might be the epigrams of Marc. gr. 524, in S. Lampros, 'Ο Μαρκτιανὸς κωδ. 524', *NE* 8 (1911), 3–59, 123–92.

<sup>17</sup> M. Gleason, *Making Men: sophists and self-presentation in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, 1995); E. Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity: the rhetoric of performance in the Roman world* (Michigan, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> C. Roueché, 'The rhetoric of Kekaumenos', above; *cadem*, 'The literary background of Kekaumenos', in C. Holmes and J. Waring, eds., *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond* (Leiden, 2002), 111–38.

<sup>19</sup> See most incisively P. Magdalino, 'Byzantine Snobbery', in Angold, ed., *The Byzantine Aristocracy*, 58–78.

<sup>20</sup> A. Garzya, 'Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit', *BSI* 34 (1973), 1–14.

performative nature of twelfth-century literary society may best be seen in the small group of inaugural lectures which survive from the middle of the twelfth century.<sup>21</sup> Unlike modern conventions which throw light on great predecessors and the origins of the chair, Michael Italikos, George Tornikes, Michael *ho tou Thessalonikes* and Michael *ho tou Anchialou* show an ebullient self-confidence, a performative egocentricity with display in mind. The frustrations of stalled careers, the relief and delight of promotion, claims of advancement by pure merit, complaint at imagined or real career setbacks, exuberant joy at the recognition of (one's own) talent, a clear view of the task ahead and fulsome praise of the patron who got them there: these are the expected *topoi* of this understudied genre. The confidence of the *rheto*rs, their sense of hierarchy and of the place of the intellectual shine through, as well of their certainty of a sure home in a highly agonistic and performative literary milieu.<sup>22</sup>

The part played by *rheto*rs in and around the Byzantine court has been well suggested by Paul Magdalino, and is explored elsewhere in this volume. And it is here that his metaphor of the modern media makes most sense: the Byzantines were the masters of what we have learned to call 'spin'. Whether it is a *rheto*r doing the unthinkable and blaming the *laudandus* by praising what he in fact has not done,<sup>23</sup> or a politician-speaker accepting the unpalatable inevitable by urging it upon the emperor,<sup>24</sup> or an emperor paving the way for a new policy by having it proclaimed by an apparent critic,<sup>25</sup> Byzantine politics depended on rhetoric. The persuasiveness of epideictic is subtle but steely. And decisions once made, policies implemented, are presented in the best possible light, courtesy of rhetoric.

So rhetoric enables the celebration of everyday reality, facilitates communication, and articulates and regulates the expression of ambition and the whole political process. There is also of course an emotional function. It is perhaps harder to show that rhetoric was not a barrier to the expression of real feelings than to everyday reality: how do we know

<sup>21</sup> Michael Italikos, as *didaskalos tou euangeliou* (Christmas 1142), George Tornikes as *didaskalos tou psalterou* in 1146 and *didaskalos tou euangeliou* (11 November 1151), Michael *ho tou Thessalonikes* (29 August 1153) and Michael *ho tou Anchialou* as *hypatos ton philosophon* (18 July 1167+).

<sup>22</sup> M.E. Mullett, 'Byzantine Inaugural Lectures' (Inaugural professorial lecture, Queen's University Belfast, October 2000).

<sup>23</sup> E.g. Theophylact of Ochrid on support for *logoi* at the end of both Or. 4 to Constantine Doukas and Or. 5 to Alexios I (ed. P. Gautier, *Théophylacte, I, Discours, traités, poésies* [Thessalonike, 1980], 211.8–10; 242.1–9). On subversion see M. Mullett, 'The imperial vocabulary of Alexios I Komnenos', in M. Mullett and D. Smythe, eds., *Alexios I Komnenos*, vol. 1 (Belfast, 1996), 390–94.

<sup>24</sup> E.g. Theophylact, Or. 5 (ed. Gautier, *Théophylacte, I*), 235.10–11.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. John the Oxite, *Logos eis ton basilea* (ed. P. Gautier, 'Diatribes de Jean l'Oxite', *REB* 28 [1970], 5–55) and discussion in Mullett, 'Vocabulary', 390–91.

what is real?<sup>26</sup> In a sense all feelings we detect from text are textual feelings and not real feelings, and we certainly cannot argue from assumed unchanging verities of the human heart, though there is clearly a real issue around the extent to which human nature does change over time. Byzantine letters of the period may appear to be supercharged with compressed emotion: love, friendship, separation, exile are its content, polished and burnished until decoding was a labour of love, and densely packed into the famous *metron* or onto a single sheet of parchment.<sup>27</sup> But how do we actually know that the enablement and management of emotion is in play?

Perhaps one indicator is that the sixteen surviving *consolationes* of the twelfth century appear to be geared to the individual circumstances of the bereaved. They vary in the balance of lament, *parainesis* and praise, in the ordering of *topoi*, in the extent to which the triangular set of relationships between the consoler, the consoled and the defunct is emphasized and in what gives comfort. For example, very few lay any great stress on lament, on deepening the grief of the addressee, as prescribed in Menander, before beginning to comfort and console. What is thought to comfort the bereaved also varies: a peaceful and painless death, the presence of the family, angelic support, the existence of yet further siblings, the possession of the corpse (after all, many bodies are lost in shipwrecks or by the ravages of wild beasts). And the relative stress on the balance of persons in the *consolatio* relationship (consoler, consoled and defunct) is also very different. Some place all the emphasis on the friendship between the writer and the consoled; sometimes it is the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased which is emphasized; sometimes the mourner is centre stage and his/her relationship with the deceased.

What is most surprising is the consciousness that surfaces from time to time both of the bereavement process and of the part that rhetoric can play. All are aware of the power and dangerous potential of words. Manuel Straboromanos in a speech to the empress Eirene Doukaina after the death of her brother Michael the *protostrator* voices the worries of Eirene's entourage that she is bottling up her emotions, hiding her grief under smiles and retreating into herself: there are good and bad kinds of affliction, and grief which is hidden rather than lived through is like a ravening beast, bringing more pain.<sup>28</sup> Gregory of Oxeia in letter 5 to the *porphyrogennete* Theodora on the death of her husband uses the image of a cloth further inflaming the eye it was intended to bathe: bad rhetoric

<sup>26</sup> B. Parkinson, *Ideas and Realities of Emotion* (London, 1995).

<sup>27</sup> M.E. Mullett, 'The classical tradition in the Byzantine letter', in M. Mullett and R. Scott, eds., *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition* (Birmingham, 1981), 75–93.

<sup>28</sup> Manuel Straboromanos, *Logos* (ed. P. Gautier, *REB* 23 [1965], 195–201).

could do harm instead of healing.<sup>29</sup> The rhetoric of death in Byzantium is geared more by occasion and personalities than by strict literary rules or by rigid religious ritual. And it is an area in which emotion is paramount, and very volatile. Grief engenders both guilt and anger, a powerful cocktail of emotions. And the theorists were aware of that danger.<sup>30</sup>

Whether or not in specific examples we can be certain that emotion is managed by rhetoric, what is clear is that rhetoric in Byzantium also carries a burden of embellishment. Rhetorical genres represented a high proportion of the privileged text we call literature and they called *logoi*, and all the force of tropes and *topoi*, figures and colours is mobilised to present that rhetoric in its most decorative form. Level of style, *mimesis*, quotations, images, wordplay, metre or prose rhythm are combined, consistent with a detectable internal aesthetic, to render the piece of writing a veritable work of art, fit for the correspondent, for the *theatron*, for the patron, for the Almighty.<sup>31</sup>

So rhetoric had social, political, emotional and aesthetic functions in Byzantine society. Rhetoric records both the theory and the practice of that performance, and, as we have seen, in itself offers a first step in reading Byzantine literature, 'on its own terms'. It does this by comparing theory with practice and so edging towards a sense of both the horizon of expectations of the first textual community of Byzantine rhetoric, and also of working practices of Byzantine authors. This may not be as easy as we think. Byzantine literature is in itself a reading of Byzantine theoretical texts which reverberate with more ancient and more recent texts in *mimesis*: we simply cannot know whether what any Byzantine author had was Menander Rhetor as we have the two treatises, or simply something extraordinarily like them. And how did they interact with other intertextualities? Is the relationship really that simple?<sup>32</sup> Is reading Byzantine rhetorical theory against Byzantine rhetorical

<sup>29</sup> Gregory of Oxeia, Ep. 5 (ed. P. Gautier, *REB* 31 [1973]) 222.

<sup>30</sup> Menander, *Peri epideiktikon*, XI (epitaphios), XVII (monodia), ed. Russell and Wilson, 171, 177, 207.

<sup>31</sup> The detection of the internal aesthetic of an author or a rhetorical community is a major task in the reading of any Byzantine text. Help may be found in the pitifully few works of literary criticism which have come down to us like Photios' *Bibliothēke* and various speeches of Psellos and others. See for example T. Hågg, 'Photios as a reader of hagiography: selection and criticism', *DOP* 53 (1999), 43–58; W. Hörandner, 'Literary criticism in eleventh-century Byzantium: views of Michael Psellos on John Chrysostom's style', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 2 (1996), 336–44; K. Hult, *Theodore Metochites on Ancient Authors and on Philosophy* (Göteborg, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> For a collection of studies which shows awareness of the relationship between theory and practice, but also the play of intertextuality in a rhetorical community see M. Whitby, ed., *The Propaganda of Power: the role of panegyric in late antiquity* (Leiden, 1998). For a sense of the place of rhetoric in the development of early Byzantine literature see A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: the development of Christian discourse* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991).

practice really the simple and obvious and self-contained reading strategy it at first sight appears to be? Can a reading of Hermogenes or Aphthonios or Theon or Nikolaos really illuminate adequately a Byzantine text, let alone, as Henry Maguire argued long ago, Byzantine images?<sup>33</sup> If we could reconstruct the full intertext with school education, the texts heard and read, in house and church and on the streets, the commentaries of contemporaries read, the sermons and discourses absorbed, the choices which posed themselves to our authors at every turn, choices of vocabulary, of structure, of level of style, of figure or trope, of topos, could we even then reconstruct that primary horizon of expectation? Clearly we cannot. Texts do not speak for themselves: they require us to interpret. It is not just that the past is another country: so is every text a different country. We therefore must have critical approaches which will be current and meaningful in the age in which we are reading as well as pertinent and applicable to texts of the age we are studying. What concerns us next is the relationship of these with Byzantine rhetoric.

What is the function of rhetoric for the modern reader of Byzantine texts? There are several very common views. One is represented by Nicol: surgery is necessary; if you can find the canker then you can cut it out, and the text may be unaffected and 'safe'. Or (slightly more positive) there is the ancient sport of topos-hunting: once you identify a topos you can net it, show it off and disregard it. These approaches do not require very much critical sophistication. But there are more positive approaches to rhetoric which are simultaneously unwelcoming of modern literary theory. Rhetoric must appear to many Byzantinists, battered by culture wars, or just cautious, as 'safe theory' in the sense of 'safe sex'.

First of all (this argument goes), rhetoric was read by Byzantines, so we are not in danger of 'reading into' our texts concepts and aesthetics which were not available to them and may never have occurred to them. Jakov Ljubarskij is a rare Byzantinist who is prepared to let his texts go, to allow them to mean different things to different readers, to take on different meanings, to be valued with the values of each evaluating society.<sup>34</sup> Only when we can do this do we allow Byzantine literature to take its place like any other literature, to find its way into different canons, break into the prevailing literary history from Greece to Rome to western medieval Europe to the Renaissance. But few of us would want to take the ultimate Derridean step of denying life outside the text, of denying context (or making it part of text): we are historicist enough to want to know the primary reception of our text, and rhetoric appears to

<sup>33</sup> H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1981).

<sup>34</sup> J. Ljubarskij, elsewhere in this volume.

offer us that facility.<sup>35</sup> What I am trying to suggest is that this presumption is illusory: we should resist the comfort of this view of rhetoric, and refuse to retreat into a purely historicist reading. We must study whatever reception context we can find, but we must also recognize that it will not get us very far.

Secondly, rhetoric has the appeal of offering a securely intentionalist view of Byzantine literature. We can reconstruct the intention (even if not strictly Byzantine) as well as the result.<sup>36</sup> Here a reading of rhetoric as semiotics or communication theory offers us the enticement of being ourselves able to decode that heavy burden, the message. There are attractions in this view for our study of interactive genres like letters or speeches, but again, though we can often watch the recalled moment of reception and decoding, we cannot be certain that this communication system is free of noise, or of additional intertext.<sup>37</sup> Where genre is concerned (and we must see genre as primarily though not exclusively rhetorical), the kind of genre theorists whom Alexander Kazhdan and Jakov Ljubarskij enthusiastically rebut<sup>38</sup> are exactly the kind of theorists who see rhetoric as a closed system. Their genre system is a static taxonomy not a dynamic entity changing over time. It is safe, closed and intentionalist. We should suspect that safety; it in no way represents the Byzantine uses of genre — or the strongest strains of modern genre-theory.

And, finally, there may be a great attraction in that rhetoric is familiar: it has long since found its way into not just the classicist's but also the medievalist's vocabulary. For decades now, thanks to the pioneering work of giants like Curtius and Auerbach,<sup>39</sup> the most traditional of historians have known about *topoi* and tropes, the *captatio benevolentiae* (or modesty topos), and *ekphrasis* (usually defined as a 'rhetorical description of a work of art' and described as infuriatingly uninformative).<sup>40</sup> This does not, of course, mobilize the full power of rhetoric, but it makes us feel that rhetoric has a place in medieval studies, even if it can be ignored when it is inconvenient. But, with very

<sup>35</sup> 'Il n'y a pas de hors-texte': J. Derrida, *On Grammatology*, tr. G.S. Spivak (Baltimore, 1976), 158.

<sup>36</sup> E.g. E.D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, Conn, 1967).

<sup>37</sup> For communication theory, see A.G. Smith, *Communication and Culture: readings in the codes of human interaction* (New York, 1966); for semiotics, U. Eco, *The Role of the Reader: explorations in the semiotics of texts* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1979).

<sup>38</sup> A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, famously, in *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1987), viii.

<sup>39</sup> E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. W.R. Trask (New York, 1953); E. Auerbach, *Mimesis: the representation of reality in western literature*, tr. W.R. Trask (New York, 1957).

<sup>40</sup> For the classic corrective to these howlers, still distressingly prevalent, see L. James and R. Webb, "'To understand ultimate things and enter secret places": ekphrasis and art in Byzantium', *Art History* 14 (1991), 117.



few exceptions like G.L. Kustas,<sup>41</sup> Byzantinists have not provided the necessary corrective: the implications for a society shot through with rhetorical culture have not been absorbed. Byzantinists prefer to carp rather than draw conclusions from the ubiquity of rhetoric. And in the absence of a holistic view of rhetoric in Byzantium, critical reading based on rhetorical theory can all too easily feel the need of no other theory. Can we ignore current critical approaches, or, in short, theory?

It is, of course, my contention that we cannot. To undertake a rhetorical analysis of any Byzantine text is an essential first step in the heavy burden of decoding, but only a first step. The aim should not be to discard the text or fail to take it seriously; the presence of rhetorical figures, or more generally its rhetoricality, is in itself an indicator of the nature of the text, its pretensions, its context and reception. A double level of theoretical approach is necessary in most Byzantine texts, to treat them as texts before using them as sources: perhaps a third level is necessary if we are to use medieval theoretical tools before modern ones. Brian Stock said in 1986 that 'there exists at present, as there has not for some decades, the possibility of serious cooperation between the fields of history and literature'.<sup>42</sup> He pinpointed a moment when positivism among historians was particularly low, still drunk with heady Annales-school mentalité, and when New Historicism was riding high in literary studies: 'Are we being historical yet?'.<sup>43</sup> From this providential conjunction he argued that it would be possible not only to delineate specific textual communities in the middle ages but also to understand how a textually oriented society came into being. Paradoxically, he notes, he chose to use methods medieval in origin but which have only been rediscovered through recent investigations in linguistics, philosophy, anthropology and psychoanalysis, disciplines which are unconcerned with the medieval epoch and as a rule are a-historical in nature. He might have added rhetoric to the list: theory is the new rhetoric.

What is theory?<sup>44</sup> A recent definition emphasizes its cogent interdisciplinarity, its analytical nature, its critique of the common-sense, its reflexivity. 'Works regarded as theory have effects beyond their original field', and may on occasion be of use to the Byzantinist who aims at interdisciplinarity, analysis and reflexivity. Further, there are three reasons why ignoring modern reading tools would be a mistake for Byzantinists. One is that this strategy would have the effect of cutting

<sup>41</sup> G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1973).

<sup>42</sup> B. Stock, 'History, literature and medieval textuality', in K. Brownlee and S.G. Nichols, eds., *Images of Power: medieval history/discourse/literature* (New Haven, Conn., 1986), 7.

<sup>43</sup> C. Porter, 'History and literature: "After the New Historicism"', *New Literary History* 21 (1990), 253-72.

<sup>44</sup> J. Culler, *Literary Theory: a very short introduction* (Oxford, 1997).

Byzantine literature off even further from other medieval literatures, and further from the western canon. A second is that analysis of all the functions of rhetoric in Byzantine society identified above can benefit from specialist theoretical approaches. A third is that modern theorists themselves do not ignore rhetoric; indeed, it has informed their approach.

Firstly, western medievalists are far from seeing a clear divide between the rhetoric of Auerbach and Curtius and the new rhetoric of Genette and Barthes. Expressed in terms of 'the linguistic turn' or occasionally 'rhetorical turn', Brian Stock's prophecy has come true for historians as well as philologists.<sup>45</sup> Foucault and Spivak, Bourdieu and Butler are as essential reading in the 'new philology' as Aristotle and Quintilian. 'Theory and the premodern text' are natural bedfellows, as in some European literatures are rhetoric and the modern or post-modern text.<sup>46</sup> Theirs is a continuity which contributes to the European canon, for the awareness of rhetoric in French literature, for example, is an almost unbroken thread. But rhetoric divides as it also brings together: The European canon as it recognises rhetoric recognizes a rhetorical tradition which progresses from Plato and Aristotle to Cicero and Quintilian; Aphthonios and Hermogenes do not figure, so that, for example, the concept of the monody is strange to modern westernist students of rhetoric. If we are to bring Byzantine literature where we may believe it belongs, into an acknowledged place in a tradition from the classical world to the Renaissance and beyond, the argument begins with rhetoric.

Secondly, we have identified various functions of rhetoric in Byzantine society. The analysis of each of these is dependent on the insights of various disciplines each with their own developed theory. The social function of rhetoric demands anthropological analysis. Ceremony has long been understood by Byzantinists through the approaches of Victor Turner,<sup>47</sup> the performativity of gender through the modern ethnography of Michael Herzfeld,<sup>48</sup> spectacle relating to Don Handelman's approach to public events.<sup>49</sup> Analysis of power, especially gendered power, calls for Foucault, analysis of emotion may stop at

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<sup>45</sup> S.G. Nichols *et al.*, 'The new philology', *Speculum* 65 (1990), 1-108; E. Clark, 'The Lady Vanishes: dilemmas of a feminist historian after the "linguistic turn"', *Church History* 67 (1998), 1-31.

<sup>46</sup> P. Strohm, *Theory and the Premodern Text* (Minneapolis, 2000); M. Hawcroft, *Rhetoric: readings in French literature* (Oxford, 1999), and my thanks to Christopher Robinson for discussion.

<sup>47</sup> V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: the human seriousness of play* (Baltimore, 1982).

<sup>48</sup> M. Herzfeld, *The Poetics of Manhood: contest and identity in a Cretan mountain village* (Princeton, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> D. Handelman, *Models and Mirrors: towards an anthropology of public events* (Oxford, 1990).

popular bereavement literature but may press into the trampled marchlands of psychology, anthropology and linguistics.<sup>50</sup> The aesthetic function raises issues of display and perception. The more Byzantine Studies develops as a subject in its own right and in relation to other disciplines, the more absurd it would seem if these insights were not harnessed to problems in the social study of rhetoric.

Third, and perhaps most persuasively, theorists themselves show an interest in rhetoric. Barthes traced the decline of the 'old rhetoric', Ricoeur's 'vast empire of rhetoric', and a new rhetoric was charted and claimed, by formalists, Marxists and deconstructionists, espousing rhetoric perhaps in response to Leavisites who had delighted in opposing 'mere rhetoric' to organically structured poetry.<sup>51</sup> *New Literary History* devoted a whole volume to *Rhetorical Analyses* and the Shakespeare Folger Library advertised a seminar on the basis of 'the recent revival of interest in rhetoric following the work of Paul de Man'.<sup>52</sup> From the point of view of Marc Fumaroli of the Académie Française, this turning point was dated to the 1970s when the waning influence of rhetoric on the lycée system had disappeared and a whole movement set itself to reread ancient texts in the matrix of modern interpretation: Marxist or deconstructionist or psychoanalytical, a whole raft of approaches 'which came to receive the generic term postmodern'.<sup>53</sup> Suddenly everything was the rhetoric of this or the rhetoric of that.

But is this the rhetoric we know and love? The apologists for rhetoric Brian Vickers and Alastair Fowler have argued that these scholars had little real appreciation for the rhetoric our Byzantines read and wrote. Fowler saw deconstructionists as hostile to traditional rhetoric; Jakobson, Genette and Lodge are castigated for reducing the wide range of classical figures and tropes to two, metaphor and metonymy;<sup>54</sup> Genette himself complained that metaphor had been left isolated.<sup>55</sup> Vickers speculated that de Man had never read Aristotle or Quintilian, and that he can only have a harmful effect on the study of rhetoric: 'for the totally unhistorical and self-confusing nature of his raids on rhetoric could

<sup>50</sup> A.R. Littlewood, 'The Byzantine letter of consolation in the Macedonian and Komnenian periods', *DOP* 53 (1999), 19–41.

<sup>51</sup> R. Barthes, 'The old rhetoric: an aide-mémoire', in *The Semiotic Challenge*, tr. R. Howard (Oxford, 1988), 11–94; P. Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language*, tr. R. Czerny, K. McLaughlin and J. Costello (London, 1978), 9, 10.

<sup>52</sup> *New Literary History* 9 (1978).

<sup>53</sup> M. Fumaroli, 'Rhétorique et postmodernité', in *Actualité de la rhétorique*, ed. L. Pernot (Paris, 2002), 13–16.

<sup>54</sup> A. Fowler, 'Apology for rhetoric', *Rhetorica*, 8.2 (1990), 103–18.

<sup>55</sup> G. Genette, 'Rhetoric restrained', *Figures of Literary Discourse*, tr. A. Sheridan (Oxford, 1982), 102–26 at 114–15.

paralyse and stultify any further attempt'.<sup>56</sup> The decline of rhetoric is traced to de Quincey's claim that 'the age of rhetoric, like that of chivalry has passed among forgotten things',<sup>57</sup> to the renaming of chairs of rhetoric and *belles lettres* to chairs of English Literature, and to the mismatch between the traditional concerns of rhetoric with verse and the new focus on the novel from the 1960s on. Byzantinists would find it very natural for rhetoricians to concern themselves with prose, and have no need of Wayne Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction*<sup>58</sup> to approach fictionality.

Yet there is also a welcome familiarity about some treatments of rhetoric in cultural studies: to take one example, Carolyn Miller's work is immediately recognizable to Byzantinists in her treatment of genre, epideictic and rhetorical community: 'genre does not lend itself to taxonomy, for genres change, evolve and decay',<sup>59</sup> 'genre is pragmatic, fully rhetorical, an aspect of social action'; 'epideictic serves not as a single genre but as a form of life — a celebratory (or reaffirmative) arena of social life';<sup>60</sup> 'In a paradoxical way, a rhetorical community includes the "other"'. So rather than seeing community external to rhetoric, I want to see it as internal, as constructed'.<sup>61</sup> So does the Byzantinist. And professional students of Byzantine rhetoric would do well to equal this description of what rhetoric does: 'Rhetoric ... serves as a two-handed technology. On the one hand it comprehends how empirical events may be constituted and exchanged among participants through and as discursive practices. On the other it serves as a mode of metacritical practice, a methodology of analysing and bringing to light interests, power-plays, and ideological sleights of hand that may function as the "ends" of rhetorical "means" ... Rhetoric that is to say is an ambivalent mediator'.<sup>62</sup>

At the beginning of the new millennium Byzantinists are already aware of what can be gained by the level of theoretical literary analysis and how this relates to our use of rhetoric. Understandably, theorists with expertise in the middle ages, even the western middle ages, have had the strongest attraction for Byzantine scholars, but these writers

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<sup>56</sup> Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 464, drawing on 'The atrophy of modern rhetoric: Vico to de Man', *Rhetorica* 6.1 (1988).

<sup>57</sup> T. de Quincey, *Collected Writings*, ed. D. Masson (London, 1897), 81, 97.

<sup>58</sup> W.C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago, 1973).

<sup>59</sup> Contra T.M. Conley, 'Ancient rhetoric and modern genre criticism', *Communications Quarterly* 27 (1979), 47–53.

<sup>60</sup> C. Miller, 'Genre as social action', *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984) 151–167 repr. in A. Freedman and P. Medway, eds., *Genre and the New Rhetoric* (London, 1994), 37.

<sup>61</sup> C.R. Miller, 'Rhetorical community: the cultural basis of genre', *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, 67–78 at 74.

<sup>62</sup> J. Kelleher, 'Rhetoric, nation and the people's property', in A. Kear and D.L. Steinberg, eds., *Mourning Diana: nation, culture and the performance of grief* (London and New York, 1999), 77–97, at 77.

often also display expertise in rhetoric, or at least an interest in genre. Bakhtin's ability to draw even the saint's life into his analysis<sup>63</sup> has ensured that Byzantinists have engaged with the chronotope,<sup>64</sup> alien speech,<sup>65</sup> adventure time,<sup>66</sup> adventure space<sup>67</sup> — and, I am convinced, should also lead them to grapple with the concept of novelization as applied to the interplay of fact and fiction, interactive and narrative modes at the time of the revival of the ancient novel. Genette with the three-volume *Figures* has attracted nearly as much attention,<sup>68</sup> and Jauss's paper 'Literary history as a challenge to literary theory'<sup>69</sup> shows the same kind of attraction as Jakobson.<sup>70</sup> Compared with the cult of Freud or Lacan or Foucault or Bourdieu these authors are under-used by Byzantinists. But the possibilities are manifold. To take another example, a reading of Todorov supported by Bowersock and the *progymnasmata* on *plasma* make an excellent foundation for more sophisticated approaches from the point of view of possible worlds.<sup>71</sup> It is the combination of rhetoric and theory which is crucial here, and an adventurous eclecticism. The rhetorical nature of Byzantine literature does not require a single set of approaches, nor does it put certain others beyond the pale. A pragmatic and rigorous use of any theoretical position which throws light on the problem is more important than any ideological purity. There is no reason to associate particular periods with particular approaches unless there is good historical reason like the association of Late Antiquity with Foucault and Brown at Berkeley.<sup>72</sup> After all, the nineteenth-century novel, Shakespeare's sonnets, and medieval jongleurs have all been enlightened by the work of Kosofsky

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<sup>63</sup> M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. M. Holquist, tr. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin, Texas, 1981), 115–16.

<sup>64</sup> R. Webb, in an unpublished study on the novel.

<sup>65</sup> S. MacAlister, *Dreams and Suicides: the Greek novel from antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* (London, 1996).

<sup>66</sup> R. Beaton, 'The world of fiction and the world "Out There": the case of the Byzantine novel', in D.C. Smythe, ed., *Strangers to Themselves: the Byzantine Outsider* (Aldershot, 2000), 179–88.

<sup>67</sup> M. Mullett, 'In peril on the sea: travel genres and the unexpected', in R. Macrides, ed., *Travel in the Byzantine world* (Aldershot, 2002), 259–84.

<sup>68</sup> G. Genette, *Figures* (Paris, 1966), *Figures II* (Paris, 1969), *Figures III* (Paris, 1972).

<sup>69</sup> In *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Brighton and Minnesota, 1982), 3–45.

<sup>70</sup> R. Jakobson, 'Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances' in R. Jakobson and M. Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague, 1956), 53–82.

<sup>71</sup> T. Todorov, 'The notion of literature', *New Literary History* 5 (1973), 7–8; *idem*, *Genres in Discourse*, tr. C. Porter (Cambridge, 1990); G.W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History* (Berkeley, 1994); R. Ronen, *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory* (Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>72</sup> In none of the celebratory appreciations of the achievement of P.R.L. Brown, in J. Howard-Johnston and P.A. Hayward, eds., *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: essays on the contribution of Peter Brown* (Oxford, 1999) is this happy coincidence stressed.

Sedgwick.<sup>73</sup> New historicism may hitherto have been monopolized by the Renaissance world, but similar colonial milieus in Byzantium might offer similarly brave new worlds:<sup>74</sup> the indeterminacy of literary and non-literary in Byzantium, the ambiguity over prose and verse, the play on fictionality in narrative at the core of which is rhetoric are all arguments from discourse why we might 'be historical yet' in Byzantine literature.

I should like to explore in four brief examples ways in which rhetorical analysis can be enhanced by the application of current critical approaches. One is Beaton's reading of Nikephoros Basilakes in his study of the re-invention of fictionality; a second is recent work by Agapitos on funerary rhetoric and the novel; a third is Ruth Webb's treatment of *ekphrasis*; a fourth is my own reading of Anna Komnene's description of Bohemond of Taranto in XIII.x.45 of the *Alexiad*.

It is still worth noting that a fundamental advance in the study of the twelfth-century romance was the acknowledgement in Roderick Beaton's *The Medieval Greek Romance*<sup>75</sup> of the contribution of rhetoric to Byzantine literature in general and to the revival of fiction in particular. In the book he approaches the whole issue through rhetoric, the educational system and then the *progymnasmata*, before turning to the group of twelfth-century novels. Here he isolates thematic elements which contribute to the artificiality or rhetoricity of the five ancient novels and their twelfth-century counterparts before proceeding to a reading of the three (or four) revival novels which elevates rhetoric to the status of saviour: (in Makrembolites's conclusion) 'it is the art of rhetoric ... that can immortalize the human, secular love of the hero and heroine and preserve it from the fate that time ... promises to bring.' For Prodromos 'it is rhetoric and the author's inventiveness that confer permanence on the lovers' union and in a different way offer something stable and lasting to his readers instead'. Eugenianos pontificates less about the role of rhetoric, subverts literary conventions and exalts nature in the place of artifice, thus engaging with rhetoric as a concept. Makrembolites not only makes play of rhetoric but he also casts his whole romance (says Beaton) in the form of an *ethopoia*.

Beaton throughout shows quiet awareness of theoretical resonance: the novel in terms of Bloomian belatedness, the timelessness of Byzantine literature in terms of Levi-Strauss as well as Proust, parallels between Lodge on the novel on the one hand and Beck and Kustas on metaphor on the other. He relies on Kristeva and Barthes for his treatment of

<sup>73</sup> E. Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English literature and male homosocial desire* (New York, 1985) lies behind both S. Gaunt, *Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature* (Cambridge, 1995) and D.M. Hadley, ed., *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999).

<sup>74</sup> See the current doctoral work of Edward Moss.

<sup>75</sup> R. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge, 1989).

genealogy and intertextuality and on Jauss for his chapter on reception. In this way he treats Byzantine texts as one would in any other literature, at that time (and indeed now) a novel approach, though one instance in itself shows the effect of the timelessness of this technique. In his reading of Nikephoros Basilakes's *progymnasmata* the originality lies less in his direct association of these mid-twelfth-century pieces with the revived novels (he was preceded by Pignani and Poljakova) than in the way he is able to analyse *ethopoia* in terms of narrative devices, as in any other fiction: without his eclectic reading, particularly of Genette and Eco, this section of the book would have been very different.

If this was an early stage in the marriage of rhetoric and theory in Byzantium, a new rigour and confidence is to be found in the recent work of Panagiotis Agapitos. Continuing work on *Livistros* and *Rhodamne* and on the funerary literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries has allowed fruitful interconnection between Byzantine rhetoric and modern theory, and a developing thematic in the context of rigorous philological research. His thorough knowledge of narratology, awareness of reception issues, a clean reconstruction of the text, a grasp of dream theory has enabled him to arrive — in a way unattempted by Alexiou and MacAlister — at a nuanced and thorough reading of *Livistros*' dream narratives.<sup>76</sup> In a series of preparatory studies for his book on funerary rhetoric, Agapitos engages with the wilder fringes of genre theory and the theory and practice of Byzantine funerary rhetoric to explain the mixing of genres and evolution of a twelfth-century system, as well as an understanding of the nature of literary change in Byzantium.<sup>77</sup> Increasingly, his sense of the literaricity of Byzantine composition and his search for an internal aesthetic have made him aware of the fundamental nature of performativity of most Byzantine genres.<sup>78</sup> This is an oeuvre which promises further synthesis of rhetoric and theory in a grounded sense of literary history.

Ruth Webb's continuing work on *ekphrasis* has taken Byzantinists far from Mango's assertion that Byzantines failed to see the art that surrounded them. Henry Maguire raised the issue of rhetorical and literary context, Ann Epstein discussed the problems in using rhetorical texts as objective descriptions; Paul Magdalino took reconstruction as far

<sup>76</sup> P.A. Agapitos, 'Dreams and the spatial aesthetics of narrative presentation in *Livistros* and *Rhodamne*', *DOP* 53 (1999), 111–47.

<sup>77</sup> P.A. Agapitos, 'Mischung der Gattungen und Überschreitung der Gesetze: Die Grabrede des Eustathios von Thessalonike auf Nikolaos Hagiotheodorites', *JOB* 48 (1998) 119–46, and in a Festschrift for Margaret Alexiou.

<sup>78</sup> In an unpublished paper, 'Writing, reading and reciting (in) the Byzantine Romances' for the Paris Byzantine Congress, 2001, a chapter for a forthcoming handbook and in 'Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης σε μια ιστορία της βυζαντινής λογοτεχνίας', in P.A. Agapitos and P. Odorico (eds.), *Pour une 'nouvelle' histoire de la littérature byzantine* (Paris, forthcoming, 2002).

as it can go. Work on the *enkainia* of Hagia Sophia at Edessa, and especially Hagia Sophia at Constantinople, enlightened the ceremonial occasion, the literary context and the poetic structure of *ekphraseis*. James and Webb disposed of popular misconceptions.<sup>79</sup> But Webb's mobilization of Barthes and Beaujour,<sup>80</sup> as well as her grasp of the continuity of rhetorical theory, in focusing on the problems of representing 'a three-dimensional object in a medium that unfolds in time' — or space through time — has brought us further, more securely than any of the previous advances.<sup>81</sup>

A final example of how rhetorical analysis and theory go hand in hand is in my recent analysis of the *ekphrasis* of Bohemond in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* XIII.x.45.<sup>82</sup> The exercise arose from two general theoretical problems: is the gaze in Byzantium always male? And is it possible to detect in Byzantine text an erotic charge? The second arises from the first, which is an attempt to find a narrative control for possible examples in interactive texts, but the control itself is not unproblematic. Doubts about the authorship of the *Alexiad*, about the gendering of the text, and assumptions about the gaze require a subtle approach combining rhetorical analysis with the application of film theory on the female gaze. Rhetorical analysis of all Anna's descriptions of individuals in terms of the *progymnasmata* on *ekphrasis* and in terms of other literary conventions for personal description establish certain remarkable features in the passage which are then explored across other texts of the period both anonymous and certainly male. A structural analysis of the passage in its immediate narrative context reveals the centrality of the passage to the work as a whole and the centrality of the relationship between Anna and Alexios within it. The application of film theory allows passages describing instances of the female gaze in the text to emerge, which are then assessed in an ethnographic context. Each strand of the analysis

<sup>79</sup> C. Mango, 'Antique statuary and the Byzantine beholder', *DOP* 17 (1963), 53–75; H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence* and 'Truth and convention in Byzantine descriptions of works of art', *DOP* 28 (1974), 114; A. Epstein, 'The rebuilding and redecoration of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople', *GRBS* 23 (1982), 79–92; P. Magdalino, 'The Bath of Leo the Wise', in A. Moffatt, ed., *Maistor: Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning* (Cambridge, 1984), 225–40; A. Palmer, 'The inauguration anthem of Hagia Sophia in Edessa', *BMGS* 12 (1988), 117–68; R. Macrides and P. Magdalino, 'The architecture of *ekphrasis*: construction and context of Paul the Silentiary's poem on Hagia Sophia', *BMGS* 12 (1988), 47–82; M. Whitby, 'The occasion of Paul the Silentiary's *ekphrasis* of S. Sophia', *CQ* 35 (1985), 216–17; James and Webb, 'To understand ultimate things'.

<sup>80</sup> M. Beaujour, 'Some paradoxes of description', *Yale French Studies* 61 (1981), 27–59; R. Barthes, 'L'effet du réel', in R. Barthes et al., *Littérature et réalité* (Paris, 1982).

<sup>81</sup> R. Webb, 'The aesthetics of sacred space: narrative, metaphor and motion in *ekphraseis* of church buildings', *DOP* 53 (1999), 59–74.

<sup>82</sup> M.E. Mullett, 'Bohemond's biceps: male beauty and the female gaze in the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene', in D.C. Smythe, ed., *Byzantine Masculinities* (forthcoming).



depends on the others; together they allow the recollected account of a gendered and eroticized viewing to emerge.

So we have seen that rhetorical readings can be enhanced by the application of current critical approaches and theory. What I should like finally to demonstrate is that the converse is also true: an awareness of rhetorical theory operating in a Byzantine context can enhance current readings of late twentieth-century texts, indeed texts less than ten years old.

The extraordinary events in Britain of the first week of September 1997 crossed the boundaries between public and private mourning, showing a public demonstration of intimate personal feelings for a public figure, one for whom the monarchy had appeared to have no further use. Public figures were measured by how well they responded to the nation's mood; the Palace showed itself quite inadequate to the task. By the middle of the week, there was a sense that even more extraordinary things might happen. We saw the making of a saint under our eyes and the emergence of a popular cult, the astonishing possibility that the monarchy might collapse or at least skip a generation. It took major public relations advice from the Prime Minister's Press Office to ensure that the week finally went off well. In this resolution of a highly emotive popular reaction, ceremony, and innovation in ceremony, played a considerable part, and in that ceremony the greatest contribution was rhetoric. The two crucial speeches of the week were the Queen's address to the nation on radio and television of Friday evening, and Earl Spencer's speech in Westminster Abbey on the Saturday. The Queen's broadcast was not planned: like the flying of a flag over Buckingham Place in the absence of the Queen it was done as a concession to adverse criticism of the royal family ('they don't seem to care').<sup>83</sup>

If we analyse these speeches from a rhetorical point of view, there is no difficulty in deciding how they are to be viewed. Earl Spencer's speech is an *epitaphios logos*, though in its emphasis on pity and on the manipulation of past, present and future, it has elements of the monody. It is largely however concerned with praise, though it was received as praise highly charged with purpose: it was without doubt the most political of twentieth-century funeral speeches in the United Kingdom. It was described by journalists as part tribute, part manifesto (does this guy want a job?). The Queen's speech is harder to classify. Addresses to the nation other than on Christmas Day are exceptional. In this case the Queen's speech was needed because of the press release in which the

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<sup>83</sup> See T. Walter, ed., *The Mourning for Diana* (Oxford, 1999); Kear and Steinberg, *Mourning Diana*; 'Special debate: flowers and tears: the death of Diana Princess of Wales', *Screen*, 39.1 (1998), 67-84; *Journal of Gender Studies* 8 (1999); these are the most scholarly accounts and interpretations. None, not even the brilliant Kelleher, 'Rhetoric, nation and the people's property', 77-97, attempts analysis in the light of rhetorical theory.

Queen had thanked her subjects for their kind notice of the Royal Family's bereavement, which was not well received. While stuffier dailies railed at the presumption of the populace for demanding that the Queen should console them, the Queen's speech reads as just that, as a *consolatio*, and was correctly identified as such by the newspaper which printed the text. In the speech there are two crucial elements. One is the element of praise. 'First I want to pay tribute'. A listener at that point knew it was going to be all right, and that it would defuse the criticism. It then moves skilfully on to those whom the country saw as the primary mourners (Diana's children)<sup>84</sup> and identified with the populace in expressing care for them. But without the element of praise this could not have worked. Vox pop interviews afterwards picked up the *prooimion* to the section of praise: 'what I say now I speak from my heart' and in echoing it ('she really did speak from her heart') confirmed that the author had got it right.

Earl Spencer's speech came over as much fresher, much more personal, and it is easy to see why. He starts with the first person ('I stand before you') though he quickly integrates his persona with the family and the nation, reversing the stages of grief as he does so. There is also a section when he deals with his close relationship with his sister in childhood and recently, which heightens the sense of pathos. He also slips, skilfully (with 'thank you'), into addressing his sister, giving a sense of communication with the deceased which recalls both Greek funerary epigrams and the modern commonplace that bereaved people continue to talk to the dead. Finally, he also focuses on the primary bereaved, and this is the point where his speech almost went off the rails in transgressing generic boundaries: he pledges his support to his sister's intentions for the bringing-up of the children. But he then with engaging and astute informality pushed the focus back on the grief of the boys: we are all chewed up, how must you feel? The essential appropriateness<sup>85</sup> of this struck home, and applause rippled through the Abbey and out into the street. It was that reintegrating applause, generated by rhetoric, that saved the monarchy — or at least the day.

So a collective grief can be seen to have a potentially destabilizing effect on a conservative establishment,<sup>86</sup> and can be defused by rhetoric.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Despite the fact that the children were addressed in only four per cent of the sample studied by B. Jones, 'Books of Condolence', in *The Mourning for Diana*, 203–14 at 210–11.

<sup>85</sup> For an analysis of the Habermasian parameters of truth, sincerity and appropriateness see M. Montgomery, 'Speaking sincerely: public reactions to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales', *Language and Literature*, 8.1 (1999), 5–33 and discussion in P. Simpson and G. Hall, 'Discourse analysis and stylistics', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 22 (2002), 136–49 at 146.

<sup>86</sup> B. Campbell, *Diana, Princess of Wales: how sexual politics shook the monarchy* (London, 1998) pushes this suggestion further — but not perhaps as far as her title suggests.

<sup>87</sup> D. Francis, G. Neophytou and L. Kellaheer, 'Kensington Gardens; from royal park to temporary cemetery', in *The Mourning for Diana*, 113–34, at 119, suggests that the Queen's

It is clear also that the rhetoricians of Byzantium were well aware of the threats the emotions of mourning posed to their relationships and careers. The manipulation of human emotions was their stock-in-trade, which is why rhetoric has got such a bad name.<sup>88</sup> But survival in the trade was dependent on skill in negotiating the pitfalls of lamenting too much or praising too little, rather than in cold-blooded manipulation. If the speaker judged the emotions wrongly the speech failed, and a career or a patron or a friendship was at stake: *consolationes* are rooted firmly in the emotions of developing relationships. Menander Rhetor, at the end of his instructions for the monody, says firmly that the monody should never be longer than 150 lines and should always be relaxed in style 'For mourners, he says, 'do not tolerate long delays or lengthy speeches at times of misfortune and unhappiness'.<sup>89</sup>

Byzantinists could make various contributions to the analysis of the events of September 1997, just as they can learn from it: the process of the development of a cult,<sup>90</sup> the role of the crowd in support of porphyrogenitan heirs<sup>91</sup> are obvious examples. But the rhetorical (in the broadest possible sense) analysis of the speeches of that week show the usefulness of an alliance between Byzantine rhetorical theory and current critical approaches. Theory should not replace rhetoric in our reading of Byzantine texts, nor rhetoric replace theory; nor does rhetoric determine the kind of theory appropriate to Byzantine texts, nor should a rigid theoretical position determine the kind of rhetoric to be analysed.

In this paper we have seen various functions (aesthetic, self-referential, emotional, interactive, political and social) of rhetoric in middle Byzantine society and we have characterized that society as highly performative. We have seen rhetoric as enabling the expression of real feelings and everyday realities, and collaborating with current critical approaches to provide nuanced, sophisticated and persuasive readings of Byzantine and twentieth-century text. Rhetoric, I would suggest, was not the canker in the cultural blood of the Byzantines: it was the cultural bloodstream itself. And it has a potential impact far beyond its medieval context.

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action on the Friday afternoon in picking up some of the flowers 'thus validating their gift' may also have contributed. In this case-study I am grateful as ever to Graham MacFarlane for anthropological perspectives.

<sup>88</sup> Vickers is good in attack as well as *In Defence of Rhetoric*, e.g. his chapter 4, 'Medieval fragmentation'; it does not of course include the medieval rhetoric of Byzantium.

<sup>89</sup> Menander, *Peri epideiktikon*, XVII, *Monodia*, ed. Russell and Wilson, 207.

<sup>90</sup> Most recently, C. Jolivet-Levy, M. Kaplan and J.-P. Sodini, eds. *Les saints et leur sanctuaire à Byzance* (Paris, 1993).

<sup>91</sup> See the reaction of Constantinople to the sidelining of Zoe and Theodora in 1042, and note Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, 168, 177, (ed. B. Wassilewsky and V. Jernstedt [St Petersburg, 1896]), 64.27, 74.2-3 on how not to join a revolt: the emperor in Constantinople (not lurking in Scotland) always wins.

Section IV  
Rhetoric and historiography



## 12. George of Pisidia and the persuasive word: words, words, words ...

Mary Whitby

Demosthenes, step forward with free speech,  
words prevail; be not now convulsed with fear;  
It is not Philip here, but the master.  
There is no danger, even should silence come upon you  
since all are commonly and gloriously defeated. 5  
The words are pressing to run back  
and again I fly to the course from the beginning.  
(*Persian Expedition* 2.1–7)

So George of Pisidia begins the second section of his first major work, a three-part iambic poem which celebrates the Persian campaign in AD 622 of his patron the Emperor Herakleios. The poet alludes to a hostile report by Demosthenes' rival the Athenian orator Aischines of an incident during negotiations with Philip of Macedon in 347/6 BC. According to Aischines, Demosthenes suffered severe stagefright and dried up when his turn to speak before Philip came; Philip kindly intervened and encouraged Demosthenes to calm himself and go on, but Demosthenes was unable to recover and when silence fell for a second time a herald terminated the audience.<sup>1</sup>

This proem declares George's own affiliations: he is a professional orator, proud inheritor of a tradition that began a millennium earlier in classical Greece. He has to hand an armoury of commonplace sentiments to assist his flattery of the honorand — here the inevitability of defeat for anyone tackling so challenging a topic (line 5), the imagery of the racecourse (line 6f.), and above all the favourable comparison of Herakleios with Philip of Macedon, victorious general, conqueror in Greece, 'the architect of Macedonian greatness'.<sup>2</sup> His phrase 'words prevail' (line 2) suggests the continuing power and importance of rhetoric at Herakleios' court.

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<sup>1</sup> On the *False Embassy*, 34–6. The allusion is identified and discussed by J.D.C. Frendo, 'The poetic achievement of George of Pisidia', in A. Moffat, ed., *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning* (Canberra, 1984), 159–87, at 180. All translations from George of Pisidia are my own.

<sup>2</sup> A.B. Bosworth, in *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd ed.), 1161.

I want to argue that George was first and foremost a Demosthenes, and that we must try to understand how his rhetoric works in order to use him as a historical source. I will say something of his literary abilities which show how he stands Janus-like at the junction of the classical and medieval worlds, and then explore some strands of his rhetorical techniques, first in his adaptation of a prose text and then by looking at references in his poetry to the word (*logos*), words, and finally silence. But first a little scene-setting.

*Setting, oeuvre, role*

The eastern campaigns of the Emperor Herakleios in the 620s were a major but unexpected triumph. They reversed disastrous Persian advances into the Byzantine empire over the first two decades of the seventh century and left the Shah Khusro II dead after a palace coup.<sup>3</sup> But they had no Thucydides or Prokopios to record them. Prokopios' successor Theophylakt Simokatta was writing in the 620s, but he looked back to the reign of the Emperor Maurice (582–602) a generation earlier for his theme.<sup>4</sup> The contemporary *Paschal (Easter) Chronicle* provides only a plain though high-quality narrative of select events and breaks off at the moment of victory in 628. When the chronicle of Theophanes was compiled in the early ninth century, George of Pisidia was an important source for these years and fragments of his poetry are embedded in Theophanes' narrative.<sup>5</sup>

The surviving poems comprise a number of short appeals and celebrations and three substantial works dealing with Herakleios' military activities, the *Persian Expedition*, the *Avar War* and the *Heraklias*. His commissioned work *Against Severus* belongs to the context of attempts at reconciliation between Chalcedonians and monophysites in the 630s.<sup>6</sup> Other works (which include almost a hundred epigrams, many on sacred

<sup>3</sup> Details: J.D. Howard-Johnston, 'Heraclius' Persian campaigns and the revival of the east Roman empire, 622–630', *War in History* 6 (1999), 1–44.

<sup>4</sup> Although J.D.C. Frendo, 'History and panegyric in the age of Heraclius: the literary background to the composition of the *Histories* of Theophylact Simocatta', *DOP* 42 (1988), 143–56, convincingly argues that Theophylact writes through the lens of events of his own day.

<sup>5</sup> Other quotations are cited in the *Suda* lexicon. Discussion of fragments and possible lost poems: A. Pertusi, *Giorgio di Pisidia Poemi: I. Panegirici epici* (Ettal, 1960), 17–31; J.D. Howard-Johnston, 'The official history of Heraclius' Persian campaigns', in E. Dabrowa, ed., *The Roman and Byzantine Army in the East* (Cracow, 1994), 57–87; L. Tartaglia, *Carmi di Giorgio di Pisidia* (Turin, 1998), 18–20 (recent survey).

<sup>6</sup> Dated as late as 638 and related to Herakleios' monothelite *Ekthesis* by L. MacCoull, 'George of Pisidia, *Against Severus*: in praise of Herakleios', in R. Dahood, ed., *The Future of the Middle Ages and Renaissance: problems, trends and opportunities for research* (Turnhout, 1998), 69–79. Tartaglia, *Carmi*, 25, dates the work about 630, following Pertusi, but notes Gonnelli's suggestion of 633.

topics) begin from religious themes, although several allude to contemporary politics, for example the long *Hexaemeron*.

George's earliest poem, *On Herakleios' Return from Africa*, which belongs fairly soon after Herakleios seized power in 610,<sup>7</sup> looks forward hopefully to the dawning of a new age after the 'tyranny' of Phokas, and ends (line 75) with an appeal to Herakleios to accept his work. His first substantial poem, *On the Persian Expedition* a decade or so later (in 623), closes (3.374–84) with a self-confident dedication of the work to the emperor. This suggests that George was in the interim adopted as official spokesman for Herakleios' regime, and that his public poetry was composed to present to the people of the capital a positive profile of the emperor's leadership.

Herakleios was in need of a writer skilled in wordsmanship as his publicist. His campaigns against Persia were undertaken not in an optimistic spirit, but rather as a desperate effort to halt Persian incursions into the empire which had already suffered the loss of Jerusalem (614) and the granary of Egypt (619). Asia Minor itself next came under threat, while at the same time from the west the Avars had their own ambitions that extended even to Constantinople. Moreover, Herakleios' decision to train and lead the army in person, while ultimately vindicated, entailed protracted periods of absence from Constantinople. These were unacceptable to a population already resentful of economic hardships and by now long accustomed to having their emperor permanently resident:<sup>8</sup> it is no coincidence that Herakleios' first successful campaign abroad in 622 is the subject of George's first major poem.<sup>9</sup> When Avars and Persians encircled Constantinople in 626 with Herakleios far away in the east, all George's persuasive powers were required in phrasing an appeal to him to return or send aid, while at the same time presenting his deputy, the civil governor Bonos, as himself a second Herakles whose soul is linked to that of the absent emperor in such a way as to make Herakleios himself effectively present in him (*On Bonos* 1–48).

With the successful repulse of the Persian/Avar siege of Constantinople in 626, George's task became easier: joyful celebration of unexpected deliverance presented a less demanding brief; celebration apart, his *Avar War* also provides a substantial narrative of events, based on eye-witness testimony.<sup>10</sup> In 628, when news of the death of Khusro II

<sup>7</sup> Dating: Frendo, 'Achievement', 167–71.

<sup>8</sup> Theodosius II (d. 450) had been the last emperor to campaign in person.

<sup>9</sup> Herakleios had been defeated by the Persians at Antioch in 613: Howard-Johnston, 'Persian campaigns', 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Avar War* 45; cf. J.D. Howard-Johnston, 'The siege of Constantinople in 626', in C. Mango and G. Dagron, eds., *Constantinople and its Hinterland* (Aldershot, 1995), 131–42, at 131–2; Tartaglia, *Carmi*, 16f.



reached Constantinople, George composed an exultant survey of the successes of the reign in his *Heraklias*.<sup>11</sup>

### *Medium*

George wrote mainly in quantitative iambic trimeters, the metre of ancient Greek tragedy. His metrics are competent by classical standards, although like other late poets he regulates the position of accent at key points in the line, to assist comprehension of the rhythm to ears no longer sensitive to distinctions of vowel quantity.<sup>12</sup> Earlier panegyric poets had prefaced hexameter encomia with an iambic prologue intended to establish a rapport between speaker and audience, like George's Demosthenic alias.<sup>13</sup> But encomia entirely in iambics were probably already being written in the sixth century, for example by the provincial poet Dioskoros of Aphroditos.<sup>14</sup>

Indeed George himself composed a ninety-line hexameter poem which reflects on the vanity of human life,<sup>15</sup> a topic he also treated in a separate and longer iambic work (261 lines).<sup>16</sup> Although there is some overlap in material (for example the theme of life as theatre), the poems are not closely related, but seem to be independent, private exercises on a familiar homiletic theme. George handles Nonnian hexameters dexterously, but also inflexibly.<sup>17</sup> He presumably found iambics a more malleable tool for public works, some of which may have been composed at short notice.<sup>18</sup> Doubtless iambics were easier too on an audience for whom not only the

<sup>11</sup> Discussion: J.D.C. Frendo, 'Classical and Christian influences in the *Heraklias* of George of Pisidia', *Classical Bulletin* 62 (1986), 53–62. This poem includes a digression (2.173–204) on the history of the Sasanian dynasty to which Khusro belonged, an excursus designed to demonstrate its bloody and violent history, but which also allies George with the classicizing historians for whom learned digression had become a hallmark.

<sup>12</sup> Accent is regulated at line-end and before the caesura: avoidance of oxytone and proparoxytone at line-end; proparoxytone rare before third-foot caesura. Further details, M.L. West, *Greek Metre* (Oxford, 1982), 183–5, esp. 184, noting dramatically increasing strictness over the course of George's career; R. Romano, 'Teoria e prassi della versificazione: il dodecasillabo nei *Panegirici epici* di Giorgio di Pisidia', *BZ* 78 (1985), 1–22.

<sup>13</sup> T. Viljamaa, *Studies in Greek Encomiastic Poetry of the Early Byzantine Period* (Helsinki, 1968); Alan Cameron, 'Pap. Ant. III 115 and the iambic prologue in late Greek poetry', *CQ* 20 (1970), 119–29.

<sup>14</sup> J.-L. Fournet, *Hellénisme dans l'Égypte du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle. La Bibliothèque et l'œuvre de Dioscore d'Aphrodité* (Cairo, 1999), vol. 1, 278–83, 286–8.

<sup>15</sup> F. Gonnelli, 'Il *De vita humana* di Giorgio Pisida', *Bollettino dei Classici* 3.12 (1991), 118–38. Also three hexameter epigrams, nos. 11, 35, 93 (Tartaglia).

<sup>16</sup> PG 92: 1581–600; Tartaglia, *Carmi*, 427–45.

<sup>17</sup> Gonnelli, 'Il *De vita humana*', 119; cf. West, *Greek Metre*, 180.

<sup>18</sup> *On the Restoration of the Cross*, for example, is described in the eleventh-century manuscript (Paris, Suppl. Gr. 690) as αὐτοσχέδιοι, 'improvised', a term probably not to be taken literally, but indicative of relative spontaneity.

metre but also the luxuriant polysyllabic verbiage of the Nonnian hexameter made severe demands.

*George the rhetorician: the panegyric of Anastasios*

I begin my close-up of George's rhetorical techniques with his other non-iambic work, a prose adaptation (*metaphrasis*) of the *Acts* of the contemporary Persian martyr Anastasios (died 22 January 628). Its attribution to George has been challenged, but I follow its most recent editor Flusin in believing it authentic.<sup>19</sup> The work is attributed to George in the *Suda* lexicon and is closely tied to his political poetry in its imagery and ideology, for example its presentation of the perversions of Persian religion (e.g. chaps. 4, 25).<sup>20</sup> Its overall message, that of the victory of Christianity over barbarous Persian religion, is immediately congenial to the propaganda associated with Herakleios' victory over Persia.<sup>21</sup>

The martyr *Acts* on which George's *metaphrasis* is based are extant and can be dated to 630.<sup>22</sup> George's literary upgrade may belong no more than a year or two later,<sup>23</sup> and Flusin has proposed the attractive hypothesis that the occasion was the official inauguration of the cult of Anastasios in Constantinople,<sup>24</sup> an occasion for which the Patriarch Sergios, the dedicatee of George's text,<sup>25</sup> invited him to deliver his encomium. George's *Avar War*, on the 626 siege of Constantinople (of which more below) is also dedicated to Sergios,<sup>26</sup> who was an influential figure in the literary revival of Herakleios' reign: he is the likely dedicatee of Theophylakt's *History*<sup>27</sup> and

<sup>19</sup> B. Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle* (Paris, 1992), vol. 1, 191–4, discussing Usener's attribution of the work to Sophronios of Jerusalem, on the basis of the Berlin manuscript; vol. 2, 381–4. Tartaglia (*Carmi*, 32, n. 68) also accepts the work as authentic.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 2, 239.

<sup>21</sup> Herakleios' final triumphant campaign in Persia coincided with Anastasios' martyrdom, the emperor arriving at the scene on 1 February 628, ten days after Anastasios' death according to the ancient *Acts*, chap. 43, lines 4–6, cf. George, *Pan. Anast.* chap. 47, lines 1–4, with Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 2, 263–81 on the chronology.

<sup>22</sup> Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 1, 9.

<sup>23</sup> Perhaps before the return of Anastasios' relics to Jerusalem in 634, which is not mentioned by George, despite its parallelism with the return there of the Cross. The work certainly predates the death of the Patriarch Sergios in 638: Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 1, 194, n. 19; vol. 2, 381–9.

<sup>24</sup> *Saint Anastase*, vol. 2, 381–9. Flusin further suggests that the future Patriarch Pyrrhos was a crucial link, since he is named in George's encomium (chap. 11, line 21) as the spiritual father of Anastasios in his early days as a monk. He argues (vol. 2, 338f.) that Pyrrhos would have been present in Constantinople at George's recital. Cf. n. 31 below.

<sup>25</sup> Dedication to Sergios in George's preface, chaps. 1–3, especially chap. 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Avar War* 10–13; Pertusi, *Giorgio*, 207; Tartaglia, *Carmi*, 17.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian* (Oxford, 1988), 32f. and n. 30. Frendo, 'History and panegyric', 144f., n. 10, favours dedication to Herakleios.

founder of a library in the capital which probably included secular as well as theological works.<sup>28</sup> George himself was a deacon of Hagia Sophia who held administrative posts in the imperial patriarchate,<sup>29</sup> and hence a natural protégé of Sergios.

Comparison of the two versions of the *Life* reveals George's techniques. He substitutes an entirely new prologue (chaps. 1–3),<sup>30</sup> but thereafter follows the original narrative chapter by chapter, with scarcely any omission or factual change.<sup>31</sup> But the narrative is 'enhanced' by rhetorical frills — amplification, substitution of more elevated vocabulary, exclamation, insertion of first-person authorial interventions and maxims, these last two often signalling transitions.<sup>32</sup> Finally, like his verse, George's prose pays scrupulous attention to rhythm at the end of each *colon*,<sup>33</sup> further evidence of technical craftsmanship.

### *Panegyric of Anastasios: the prologue*

George's new prologue is worth a closer look.<sup>34</sup> Chapter 1 has a commonplace theme: the need for a record of the deeds of saints as an inspiration to generations to come.<sup>35</sup> This need is called a 'law' (*nomos*), the first word of the text. The function of such a record is then elaborated using a favourite source of imagery — fire and light:

A law has been given from heaven to the pious that they should guard *unquenched* the *brazier* of memory, so that the serpent is *burned up* each day by the athlete's *sparks* and future generations are *guided* by the *torch* of men past, one learning from another how to *kindle the fire*, each ever having near at hand the *illumination* of the good and being spurred by the proximity of

<sup>28</sup> Epigr. 46 Sternbach (*Wiener Studien* 14 [1892], 55f.) = Epigr. 106 Tartaglia; cf. Gonnelli, *Il De vita humana* 120, n. 15.

<sup>29</sup> According to titles attributed to him in individual poems in the manuscripts and in the *Suda* lexicon, he held the posts of *skeuophylax* and patriarchal *referendarius*; perhaps also *chartophylax*: see Pertusi, *Giorgio*, 12–14.

<sup>30</sup> The original *Acts* begin by locating Anastasios within the history of Christianity, from the Incarnation (chaps. 1–5).

<sup>31</sup> One factual omission (date of Anastasios' death) and three additions, detailed by Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 1, 195. Of these the most important is the naming of Pyrrhos as Anastasios' master at chap. 11, line 21: cf. n. 24 above.

<sup>32</sup> Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 1, 194–6 (noting, at 196, that George also sometimes retains expressions and technical terms from his source). Authorial interventions: e.g. chap. 14 opens with the image of George in his boat of words, cf. *Avar War* 126–9 (discussed below).

<sup>33</sup> Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 1, 196f.: the last pair of accented syllables are without exception separated by either two or four unaccented syllables, even at the expense of natural word order.

<sup>34</sup> The elaborate prologue is also a characteristic of George's longer poems: both the *Persian Expedition* and the *Heraklios* have disproportionately long prefaces.

<sup>35</sup> Need for record also at *Avar War* 14f.

the better man to become more greedy in imitation. For a man is *warmer* in the attempt if led by a rather recent example. (*Pan. Anast.* 1)

Anastasios, then, is the most recent in an ever-renewed inspirational fire of paradigmatic martyrs: nine words sustain the image of fire and light.<sup>36</sup>

Chapter 2 elaborates the initial reference to law:

Our Moses, who buried in the sea the second Pharaoh and by extending his hands routed the foreigners, I mean Sergios the *lawgiver* of the Churches and their teacher, since he received this *Law* from above spiritually engraved on his soul, commands as it were an Ark to be constructed for the martyr *with words*, and that the manna of his deeds be brilliantly stored up in it. But while you, O divine and holy peak of the inhabited world,<sup>37</sup> I recognize to be the mouth of God, myself I do not know as Bezaleel. So since we receive your command in fear, may the command impart to me divine inspiration. For what is yours comes from God: 'Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' (*Pan. Anast.* 2)

The Law of chapter 1 is now developed through biblical typology: the Patriarch Sergios received it, like Moses, from heaven. Hence he has commissioned this work (the 'Ark') from George. Sergios is a new Moses because he repelled the Avars from the walls of Constantinople in 626: Agostino Pertusi<sup>38</sup> saw that the opening phrase is explained by a passage towards the end of George's *Avar War* (lines 488–99), in which the sea around Constantinople is described as a new Red Sea from the blood of the barbarians who died in it:

Here the sea with a crop of corpses  
thronged and bestrewn  
was crimsoned with the blood of foreigners;<sup>39</sup>  
and now it is legitimately called Red,  
being fairly dipped with the dye of the barbarians.  
For it was necessary, I think, when it saw  
the second Pharaoh and you a new Moses  
that it copied the appearance of the Red Sea. (*Avar War* 490–7)

<sup>36</sup> ἄσβεστον, ἐμπύρσευμα, σπινθήρσιν, καταφλέγοιτο, λαμπάδι, φωταγωγοῖντο, πυρσεύειν, ἀνάλαμπιν, θερμότερος.

<sup>37</sup> Probably a reference to Moses' words to Joshua before the fight with Amalek: Exodus 17.9 'I will stand on the peak (ἐπὶ τῆς κορυφῆς) of the hill with the rod of God in my hand': see further n. 40 below. Cf. Theophylakt Simokatta, *Histories*, dial. 11: Sergios 'sits on the lofty summit of divine wisdom and makes his abode on the peak of the virtues'.

<sup>38</sup> A. Pertusi, 'L' encomio di S. Anastasio martiro persiano', *AB* 76 (1958), 5–33; cited by Flusin, *Saint Anastase*, vol. 2, 384.

<sup>39</sup> ἀλλοφύλων; cf. *Pan. Anast.* 2.2.

In the Anastasios prologue, however, after alluding to Sergios' role in the 626 siege,<sup>40</sup> George concentrates on Moses' receiving of the Law engraved on stone tablets, and the building of the Ark of the Covenant by Bezaleel on Moses' instructions.<sup>41</sup> The final reference to Moses as the mouth of God<sup>42</sup> leads on to the third figure involved in the commissioning by Sergios of a work on Anastasios — the author George himself, cast as Moses' builder Bezaleel, but rhetorically conscious of his inadequacy for the task.<sup>43</sup> The final sentence links together George, Sergios and God/divine inspiration by playing on Sergios' links with God and connecting George's rhetorical fear at the task before him with quotation from the Psalms,<sup>44</sup> a technique typical of George's poetic style (see below).

In the last and longest chapter of his prologue George develops the image of the building of the Ark step by step as described in Exodus in an appeal to the 'Israelites' of George's audience to give their attention and goodwill — a biblical adaptation of a familiar rhetorical theme. Biblical allusion is then abruptly dropped and George's task in praising his subject likened to an attempt to measure the depths of the sea with a line which, however many times it is extended, will always prove inadequate.

It is no surprise to find biblical typology used for rhetorical enhancement in a hagiographical work, although I think it is a little unusual that this typology focuses not on the subject of the *Life*, but on its patron and its author.<sup>45</sup> But my point here is that the prologue uses techniques found in more complex combinations in George's poetry. One or more extended images are introduced and sustained, often from one section to another; word-play and imagery bind together otherwise

<sup>40</sup> 'extending his hands' refers to Moses extending his hands to secure the Israelite victory over Amalek (Exodus 17.8–16), just as Sergios held out the icon of the Virgin on the walls of Constantinople in 626. For discussion of this imagery elsewhere in George's poetry and in Theodore Synkellos, see Mary Whitby, 'The Devil in disguise: the end of George of Pisidia's *Hexaemeron* reconsidered', *JHS* 105 (1995), 115–29, at 126: Sergios is likened to Moses again at *Hex.* 1874, but the same imagery is also used of Herakleios at *Pers. Exp.* 1.135–8, 3.415–17.

<sup>41</sup> Exodus 35–7. Exodus 16.32–4 suggests that manna was housed in the ark. Bezaleel: Exodus 31.2, 35.30, etc.

<sup>42</sup> Exodus 4.10–12 where Moses complains of his poor speech and the Lord responds, 'I will open your mouth and teach you what to say.'

<sup>43</sup> For Bezaleel in panegyric, cf. the anonymous *kontakion* composed for the 562/3 rededication of Hagia Sophia (C.A. Trypanis, *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* [Vienna, 1968], no. XII, strophe 12), where he is used as an analogy for Justinian.

<sup>44</sup> Psalm 110.10.

<sup>45</sup> Biblical typology: e.g. Eustratios' *Life of the Patriarch Eutychios*, see A. Cameron, 'Models of the past in the late sixth century: the Life of the Patriarch Eutychios', in G. Clarke, ed., *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Canberra, 1990), 205–23, repr. in A. Cameron, *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium* (Aldershot, 1996), II; A. Wilson, 'Biblical imagery in the preface of Eustratios' *Life of Eutychios*', *Studia Patristica* 18.1 (1983), 303–9, on the highly-wrought complex of imagery, which in this case envelops both author and honorand.

unconnected material, and form a bridge between biblical typology and rhetorical topos. Favoured quarries of imagery are established — the natural and everyday worlds, great biblical figures and episodes (and for Herakleios paradigms from classical history and mythology too). Images used in one place are picked up, reiterated and varied elsewhere, so that the works become self-referential or intertextual. Well-worn panegyric themes are refreshed by being clad in new imagery or given new associations. Above all, as here, dedicatee, theme and poet are bound together in a web of imagery, often constructed around the theme of the word (here the Ark of words, chap. 2) — the poet's word, the divine Word, words of honorand or participants in a poem.

*The poetic web of words: George's words*

I turn now to this theme of the word in the iambic poems, beginning with references to George's own word. His earliest poem, *On Herakleios' Return from Africa* opens with a sophisticated presentation of this key image:

Word does not have the power to describe you,  
since the Word of God himself has laid down that you  
are ranked above these transient words.<sup>46</sup> (Ex Africa 1–3)

By a threefold reiteration of the word *logos*, in three different cases in three lines,<sup>47</sup> the poet links standard allusion to the panegyrist's inadequacy with a complimentary reference to Herakleios' relationship to the divine Word, which elevates him above ephemeral mortal praise, much as George, Sergios and divine inspiration are linked in the last sentence of chapter 2 of the *Panegyric of Anastasios* quoted above. For an emperor who had recently seized power after eliminating his predecessor by dragging him naked from sanctuary, cutting off his right arm and head and parading the head round the capital on a pole while his body was dragged on its belly to the hippodrome,<sup>48</sup> this intimation of divine ordination would fall on ready ears. And so combining economy and flattery, the threefold link between the poet's word, the honorand and the Word of God is neatly established.

At the outset of the *Avar War*, in dedicating his poem to Sergios, George offers his words to Sergios' fertile patronage in a similarly flattering allusion:

<sup>46</sup> I follow the interpretation of Frendo, 'Poetic achievement', 171f.

<sup>47</sup> The rhetorical figure of polyptoton.

<sup>48</sup> *Paschal Chronicle*. p. 700f. Bonn; M. Whitby and M. Whitby, trans., *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD* (Liverpool, 1989), 151f.

Small words from the contests have I gathered,  
 like roses from the thorns of battle,<sup>49</sup>  
 and to you the cultivator of mind-sowing words  
 I expediently chose to bring them. (*Avar War* 10–13)

Like other longer poems, the *Avar War* is punctuated by personal interventions,<sup>50</sup> where references to George's own word link separate sections of the narrative. So, after dealing with preliminary material, George turns to his honorand and the hero of the city's survival, the Patriarch Sergios:

... and my words again  
 facilitated (εὐποροῦντες) by your allied prayer  
 as to a familiar strait (πόρον) favoured by fair weather  
 bear towards you the bark of speech (τὴν λαλοῦσαν ὀλκάδα).  
 (*Avar War* 126–9)

The well-worn image of the speaker as navigator<sup>51</sup> is given a new turn by verbal play, George's 'facilitated words' (εὐποροῦντες) lead into Sergios' sunny 'strait' (πόρον). Fifty lines later (172–89) this nautical imagery is bound into the narrative: the Avar blast from Thrace was in danger of sinking Sergios' bark (179f. τῆς ὀλκάδος / τῆς σῆς; cf. 129), but Sergios advised all on board that the useless freight of sin be jettisoned to save the universal ship.

Again, word-failure may cover an omission. Rather than attempt to describe the Avar khagan, George asks, in epic manner:

What word will suffice us,  
 what bowstring of voice or ten-tongued mouth? (*Avar War* 85f.)

A few lines later this musical image is likewise bonded into the panegyric narrative, this time by transferral to Herakleios, whose attempts at conciliation with the Avars were unsuccessful:

What lyre of tongue did he not stir,  
 harmonized from the music in him,  
 by which wild beasts are often persuaded  
 and even the people's boldness is soothed,  
 which one with the endowments of a myriad Orpheuses  
 would not soften? For indeed it is more troublesome  
 to draw a man than to soften beasts. (*Avar War* 101–7)

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *On Herakleios' Return* 84f., *Persian Expedition* 3.374–80, where similar language is used in connection with Herakleios.

<sup>50</sup> Identified by Flusin (*Saint Anastase*, vol. 2, 194) as characteristic of George's reworking of Anastasios' martyr Acts.

<sup>51</sup> Used also in *Pan. Anast.* 14.1f.: see n. 32 above; *Persian Expedition* 3.381–4.

Herakleios' words are now assimilated to the music of Orpheus in a favourite mythological paradigm.<sup>52</sup> Finally the theme of musical harmony is picked up with a new tone at the end of this poem where George calls for a spiritual hymn of celebration:

Let us then sing the hymn, not on drums  
booming unrhythmically, but with the instruments  
within us in mystical harmony;  
and let us stretch the strings of the spirit,  
our tongues for plectra and our lips as cymbals,  
and with a five-stringed concord of the senses  
let us sing the topmost to the lowest tone. (Avar War 502–8)

These word-centred passages from the *Avar War* illustrate George's ability to rise from the commonplace to the sublime, to inject freshness into the banal, and, as already seen in the panegyric of Anastasios, to bind together material by a recurring and evolving image and by verbal play. The language of the word is used to flatter his honorands — Sergios the calm strait, Herakleios an Orpheus-figure — as well as to convey the atmosphere of the moment, be it turmoil of battle or victorious exultation.

#### *Herakleios and the word*

We have already seen two important aspects of George's portrait of Herakleios, the emperor's special relationship with the divine Logos and his role as an Orpheus figure who uses the lyrical power of words to calm dissident subjects<sup>53</sup> and barbarians alike. In George's presentation, the power of Herakleios' words is an important element of his leadership. In the early days his persuasion was crucial to the revival of morale in an army paralysed by fear of the Persians:

Who would have persuaded it to arms and armed it with words?  
(Heraklias 1.125)

His words attract his scattered troops to him:

For your attracting words brought them to you  
as when another by quicksilver alone  
gathers and pulls the splinters of gold. (Heraklias 2.157–9)

<sup>52</sup> On Herakleios' *Return* 14–23 had expressed optimistic hopes of conciliation using the same Orpheus image; cf. *Persian Expedition* 2.163–9.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Heraklias* 2.46 where in a sustained medical image Herakleios is said to use 'an emollient verbal drug' on his people.



Although he did not return to assist in the defence of the capital against the Avars and Persians in 626 he sent letters which both boosted morale and gave detailed instructions on the conduct of the defence (*Avar War* 266–92):

In this way by commanding and writing each detail  
he narrated events in advance by his word. (*Avar War* 288f.)

Not only is Herakleios' word reliable by contrast with barbarian duplicity (e.g. *Pers. Exp.* 3.169f.), but he is himself open to the power of persuasion, that of his children who were considered as ambassadors to him in 626 (*Bonos* 116–27), and that of his own troops who prevailed upon him to return from the east in 622 to deal with a western threat (*Pers. Exp.* 3.15–19).<sup>54</sup>

### *The divine Logos*

Herakleios' special relationship with the divine Logos is developed in the *Persian Expedition*, where it was symbolized by the *acheiropoietos* image which he took with him, an image not painted by hands but formed without painting by the Word. Herakleios' trust in it signified the presence of the Word as his advocate in a just war (*Pers. Exp.* 1.139–53). In a hortatory address to his troops, delivered while holding up the image (*Pers. Exp.* 2.86–115) the emperor presents his Persian expedition as a religious war against those:

who wish to root out with the barbarian sword  
the vine that was cultivated by the Word. (*Pers. Exp.* 2.111f.)

At the climax of the first section of the poem, Herakleios' rescue of a foundering ship as he crossed from Constantinople to Bithynia is hailed as a symbolic precedent:

But as you snatched that hull  
from extremity and those waves so great,  
may the Word of God which everywhere shelters you  
thus save the whole cosmic vessel  
through you for all time from the tempest. (*Pers. Exp.* 1.248–52)

In the darker days of the Avar siege George felt able only to appeal that the Word might shape and guide Herakleios' thoughts (*Bonos* 156–61). But the high note of the *Persian Expedition* is sustained in a passage which brings us back to Orpheus. How, George wonders, could Herakleios have

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<sup>54</sup> Probably the Avar siege of Thessalonike: Howard-Johnston, 'Heraclius' Persian campaigns', 14f.

succeeded in uniting the disparate nations and different tongues amidst his army in 622? He drew them to himself as Orpheus did the beasts or alternatively:

Yet it is not improbable that the all-holy Spirit,  
operated even now, not with fire-bearing  
division and spectacle of tongues,<sup>55</sup>  
but your tongue the Spirit itself once again  
instilled with its corresponding grace. (Pers. Exp. 2.170–74)

George's facility in combining classical and biblical prototypes is powerfully illustrated in this evocation of a second Pentecost. It is appropriate that a writer so preoccupied with the power and versatility of words should set high value on the power of the word in his honorand as well as on the operation of the divine Word through him.

### *Sergios and the Word*

George gives a final spin to the language of the word in his treatment of the Patriarch Sergios. In the prologue to the panegyric of Anastasios, as we saw, Sergios is identified with Moses and hailed as 'the mouth of God'. George also identifies Sergios with Moses at the end of the *Hexaemeron*, where the patriarch is depicted making a series of appeals to God on behalf of Herakleios and his family. There (*Hex.* 1869–80), Sergios shares another characteristic of the biblical Moses, the weak voice which made Moses hesitate to act as God's mouthpiece:<sup>56</sup>

He shouts silently, like Moses' throat,  
and he is heard, although not stirring his mouth. (Hex. 1874f.)

In Sergios' case, his weak voice is due to fasting which has left him physically debilitated and raining tears, but mentally elevated to a higher spiritual plain. This *Hexaemeron* portrayal of Sergios has close links with that in the *Avar War*, where, in an extraordinary passage, he is identified with the Virgin whose icon he displayed on the walls of Constantinople:<sup>57</sup>

For now especially you alone are in travail for all  
and the whole earth and City is wrapped in swaddling clothes  
by you —

<sup>55</sup> Cloven tongues at Pentecost: Acts 2.3–4.

<sup>56</sup> Exodus 4.10, cf. 6.30. At *Hex.* 1870 George uses the word *ισχνόφωνος*, also used by Prokopios, *Buildings* 1.1.3 of the speaker's inadequacy. See further Mary Whitby, 'Devil in disguise', 125f.

<sup>57</sup> Well discussed by J. Trilling, 'Myth and metaphor at the Byzantine court: a literary approach to the David Plates', *Byzantion* 48 (1978), 249–63, at 257f.

this city saved by God through you —  
 Hail, general of efficacious vigil;  
 for in standing with ready heart  
*without speaking*<sup>58</sup> you spoke out, and your standing  
 swiftly became a fall for the enemy. (Avar War 134–40)

For Sergios, then, George has an accolade yet more powerful than Herakleios' links with the divine Word. The patriarch's spiritual *athlesis* enabled him to repulse the enemy without so much as uttering a word.

### Conclusion

George's emphasis on the power of words, both in his honorands and in himself, is part of the rhetoric of his poetry, which works by creating a network of links to fuse the unconnected. Links are created too at a verbal level by punning and word-play — the *nomos* example in the Anastasios panegyric or the *poros* which binds George to Sergios — and by his variable yet consistent typology for his honorands, which easily encompasses both classical and biblical figures, and is adaptable to a variety of circumstances, either to hammer home a message or evoke a mood. Just as George upgraded the martyr *Acts* of Anastasios for Sergios, his rhetorical skills enabled him to 'write up' for the Constantinopolitan public patchy or arid bulletins from the absent emperor, laundering material, for the public ear.<sup>59</sup> What the citizens of Constantinople needed in the 620s was not so much precise historical narrative as morale-boosting assurances that their leaders would not let them down. These the Demosthenes of the seventh century was well equipped to provide.

<sup>58</sup> In a further example of verbal play, μηδὲν λαλῶν picks up τὴν λαλοῦσαν ὁλκάδα a few lines earlier (129) in the transitional passage already discussed where George turns to the patriarch's role in the Avar repulse.

<sup>59</sup> Poems based on prose originals: the *Heraklias* opens with the same biblical exultation as that of the campaign dispatch preserved in the *Paschal Chronicle* for the year 628 (727f. Bonn; 182f. Whitby and Whitby). J.D. Howard-Johnston, 'Official history', argues that George had access to Herakleios' military dispatches and that the fragments preserved in Theophanes and the *Suda* are best explained as deriving from a hybrid prose/verse history compiled by him. *On the Restoration of the Cross* is a response to a dispatch bringing news from Jerusalem to the capital of the event it celebrates. L. MacCoull, 'Against Severus', suggests that this work draws on patristic florilegia.

I am grateful to Elizabeth Jeffreys for inviting me to think again about my favourite author by writing this paper.

### 13. The rhetorical structures of John Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historion*

Catherine Holmes

In recent years I have devoted much time to investigating the reign of Basil II (976–1025) and as a result have become extremely well acquainted with the *Synopsis Historion* of John Skylitzes. This lengthy text, which covers the period 811 to 1057 (or 1079 if the Continuation is included), is particularly important for my research because it contains the first connected narrative treatment of Basil's reign written in Greek.<sup>1</sup> Although Skylitzes' account is riddled with chronological and topographical mistakes, its status as the only Greek account that deals with Basil's reign in detail means that I have not been able to afford to ignore it, but instead have been compelled to develop new ways of looking at the text. Over time I have become convinced that the most fruitful way of utilizing Skylitzes' testimony lies in trying to understand his principles of selection, presentation, and interpretation rather than in verifying the facts that he transmits. Put another way, the initial step in understanding Skylitzes' treatment of any individual reign involves looking at how his synoptic narrative as a whole was constructed. In this paper I want to continue my appraisal of the construction of Skylitzes' text by analysing his narrative within a context that takes account of the precepts and practices of Byzantine rhetoric. This approach appears particularly promising given that the text's author, John

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<sup>1</sup> The main section covering the years from 811 to 1057 is published in Skylitzes (ed. Thurn), 314–69. This is the principal source for several of the most politically significant events of Basil's reign, including the revolts of Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas, and the emperor's long war of attrition against the Bulgarians. It is the narrative around which most subsequent historians, both medieval and modern, have modelled their accounts of Basil's hegemony: see, for example, George Kedrenos (ed. I. Bekker [Bonn, 1838–9], vol. 2, 416–80); ps.-Psellos (*Historia Syntomos*, ed. and trans. W. Aerts [Berlin, 1990], 105–9); John Zonaras (*Epitome Historiarum*, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst [Bonn, 1897], vol. 3, 538–69); Constantine Manasses (*Breviarum Chronicum*, ed. O. Lampsidis [Athens, 1996], 314–21); Michael Glykas (*Annales*, ed. I. Bekker [Bonn, 1836], 575–9). Skylitzes' account also provides the main template for G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (trans. J. Hussey), 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1968), 298–315; W. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford, California, 1997), 513–33. The other principal account of the reign in Greek is that of Michael Psellos (*Chronographie*, ed. Renaud, vol. 1, 1–24). However this account is both short and general. The only episodes that Psellos describes in any detail are the revolts of Skleros and Phokas.

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Skylitzes, was a senior official within the governance of the late eleventh-century emperor Alexios Komnenos, and as such likely to have been well trained in the fundamentals of rhetoric.<sup>2</sup> I will begin my investigation by offering some observations drawn from close textual analysis about how Skylitzes put his historical synopsis together. Then I will consider how these observations accord with the prescriptions about the writing of narrative laid out in Byzantine rhetorical handbooks. I will then move on to compare Skylitzes' text with another genre of literature that shares similar methods of composition: military manuals compiled in the tenth century. I will suggest that close reading of Skylitzes in the light of the military manuals can enable us to identify a rhetoric characteristic not just of historiographical epitomes but of many different varieties of synoptic literature.

*Structures of the text: Skylitzes' synopsis*

My method of working out how Skylitzes put his synopsis together involves studying the remarks that he makes about working methods, models, sources, purpose, and anticipated audience in the *prooimion* to his narrative, and then seeing how he meets those introductory prescriptions in the main body of his text.

In the preface he tells us that his models are the synopses of the early ninth-century historians George the Synkellos and Theophanes.<sup>3</sup> He describes his sources as those historians whose testimonies are limited to their own lifetimes, and whose writings are riddled with encomium and *psogos*. He lists some of these historians. They include those whose texts are still extant today, such as Joseph Genesios, as well as other historians whose compositions are now lost such as Theodore of Sebasteia and Theodore Daphnopates.<sup>4</sup> As for his working methods, Skylitzes tells us that once he collected his source materials he eliminated 'that which was written in a state of emotion or in the search of approval', 'shaved off legends', and ignored rhetoric, all elements that Skylitzes believes lead to 'dizziness and confusion'. In his own opinion his final product is 'a nourishment which is soft and finely ground in style'. This literary fare he believes will be to the taste of a mixed audience, including expert and amateur readers. He goes on to identify those who will appreciate his text as 'those who love history', those 'who prefer that which is very easy to

<sup>2</sup> Between 1090 and 1092 John Skylitzes served Alexios Komnenos as Eparch of Constantinople and *Megas Droungarios* of the Court of the *Vigla* (W. Seibt, 'Ioannes Skylitzes – zur Person des Chronisten', *JÖB* 25 [1976], 81–6).

<sup>3</sup> For the *prooimion* see Skyl., 3–4.

<sup>4</sup> On Daphnopates' connection to Skylitzes see A. Markopoulos, 'Théodore Daphnopatès et la Continuation de Théophane', *JÖB* 35 (1985), 171–82.

that which is more wearisome', those 'who are acquainted with histories', and finally those 'who are not yet acquainted with histories'.

These, of course, are only introductory remarks. If we want to see how far Skylitzes meets his compositional goals we need to look at how his ambitions play out in the rest of his text. Since Skylitzes' historical synopsis is an essentially derivative text, a narrative that is based on earlier historians' accounts, the best way of analysing how Skylitzes puts his introductory prescriptions into action is to examine how he uses his underlying source materials. Since none of Skylitzes' sources survive for the later part of his narrative including his appraisal of the reign of Basil, analysis of how Skylitzes deploys his underlying texts can only be conducted on earlier sections of his text where his original working materials are still readily available. In the analysis that follows I shall look closely at Skylitzes' account of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos, emperor from 920 to 944, and his use of his principal source for this period, the sixth book of the tenth-century historian known as Theophanes Continuatus.<sup>5</sup>

In his preface Skylitzes portrays himself as the active architect of his narrative in full control of his underlying texts. However, when attention is turned to the main body of the narrative, his energetic introductory remarks appear, at least at first glance, to suffer an ignoble collapse. Comparison of his testimony for the reign of Romanos with that of Theophanes Continuatus initially suggests that Skylitzes is little more than a copyist. His narrative sequence adheres rigidly to the framework of his underlying source and breaks off only once in order to include a story not found in Theophanes Continuatus about the deposition of the patriarch Tryphon.<sup>6</sup> In addition to following the structure of Theophanes Continuatus' text very closely, Skylitzes transmits many episodes almost verbatim: one prominent example comes during an episode when Bulgarian forces attacked the region near the palace of Pegai at the beginning of Romanos's reign. The appropriate passage from Skylitzes' account is cited here, with those phrases taken directly from Theophanes Continuatus in bold:

φεύγει μὲν ὁ ραΐκτωρ Ἰωάννης, σφάττεται δὲ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ  
ἀγωνιζόμενος Φωτεινὸς πατρικίος ὁ τοῦ Πλατύποδος υἱὸς καὶ ἄλλοι  
οὐκ ὀλίγοι. μόλις οὖν ὁ ραΐκτωρ διασωθεὶς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν  
δρόμωνα. τοῦτο καὶ Ἀλέξιος ὁ δρουγγάριος ποιῆσαι βουληθεὶς, καὶ

<sup>5</sup> For coverage of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos see, Skyl., 213–32 and Theophanes Continuatus, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838), 398–435.

<sup>6</sup> Skyl., 226–7.

μη δυνηθεῖς ἀνελθεῖν, ἐν τῇ τοῦ δρόμωνος ὑποβάθρᾳ πεσὼν ἐν τῇ  
θαλάσσει σὺν τῷ αὐτοῦ πρωτομανδάτωρι ἀπεπνίγη.<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, while analysis of Skylitzes' treatment of Theophanes Continuatus can at first imply that our author was simply a plagiarist, it is important to stress that this image does not withstand close scrutiny. Detailed examination of his text indicates that in many different ways Skylitzes transcends the status of copyist and attempts to meet the ambitions of his preface. At the most basic of levels Skylitzes tries to abbreviate rather than simply copy. Indeed his desire to abbreviate is at its most visible when he tries to combine so many phrases and sentences from the underlying source into a single unit that his prose becomes quite obscure: genitive absolutes, third person imperatives, optatives, and clauses involving strings of verbs in the accusative are all used to serve compression. The last item on this list needs explanation. He often combines several main verbs from the underlying text into a more elaborate single-verb sentence in which, though the rules of Greek syntax are observed, a large slice of the narrative is expressed in the accusative, making it more difficult to read. Thus, when Skylitzes decides to make the emperor the subject of a long sentence about the dismissal in 944 of John Kourkouas, the *domestikos* of the *scholai*, the subsequent description of the career and exploits of the general has to be rendered with several accusative participles; to add to the confusion Kourkouas is also to be found earlier in the sentence in the genitive case.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Translation: On the one hand the *rektor* John fled, whereas the *patrikios* Photeinos the son of Platypous, who was fighting for him, was killed as were several others. And so the rector having barely escaped, boarded the *dromon* (warship). And although Alexios, the admiral (*droungarios*) wanted to do the same thing, he was not able to climb up on the deck of the *dromon*; he fell into the sea and was drowned together with his *protomandator* (Theoph. Cont., 401; Skyl., 215).

Verbatim copying can also be observed in Skylitzes Continuatus' coverage of the second half of the eleventh century. As Jonathan Shepard has pointed out, Skylitzes often copies his underlying text so closely that he retains the first person singular voice of the root source (J. Shepard, 'Byzantinorussica', *REB* 33 [1975], 217).

<sup>8</sup> φθόνου δὲ κινηθέντος κατὰ τοῦ δομεστίκου τῶν σχολῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ Κουρκούα παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων (ἐβούλετο γὰρ Ῥωμανὸς ὁ Βασιλεὺς Εὐφροσύνην τὴν τοῦ δομεστίκου θυγατέρα νύμφην ἀγαγέσθαι τῷ οἰκείῳ ἐκγόνῳ Ῥωμανῷ <τῷ υἱῷ> τοῦ ἐσχάτου παιδὸς αὐτοῦ Κωνσταντίνου) ἠναγκάσθη τῆς ἀρχῆς αὐτὸν παραλῦσαι, ἐπὶ δυσὶ καὶ εἴκοσι χρόνοις καὶ μηνὶν ἐπτά ἀδιαδόχως τὴν τοῦ δομεστίκου ἀρχὴν ἰθύναντα, καὶ πᾶσαν, ὥς εἰπεῖν, τὴν Συρίαν καταδραμόντα καὶ ταπεινῶσαντα (Skyl. 230). The first two phrases in bold highlight Kourkouas in the genitive case; the last indicates the long list of clauses in the accusative. A parallel example of the inclusion of long accusative clauses occurs in Skylitzes' account of the campaigns of the general and future emperor Nikephoros Phokas during the reign of Romanos II (959–63). Once again, because emperor Romanos occupies the nominative position, Nikephoros Phokas and his many military exploits against the Arabs have to be expressed in a very long accusative passage: τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει Νικηφόρον μάγιστρον τὸν Φωκᾶν,

Skylitzes also tries to realize the aims of his preface through the use of omission. He removes legendary elements and ethnographical excurses. During his account of the attack on Constantinople by a Rus fleet in 941 Theophanes Continuatus digresses to explain the ethnic background of the empire's foes ('... and they are called Dromitai, who originate from the race of the Franks'), the purpose of the Pharos lighthouse, and the classical background behind the re-naming of the Black Sea from the 'unfortunate' to the 'fortunate', a transformation which was wrought by Heracles' defeat of a band of local pirates.<sup>9</sup> All of these grace notes are omitted by Skylitzes. Equally vulnerable to excision are excessive encomia. The exploits of John Kourkouas are subjected to severe pruning. Where Theophanes Continuatus alleges that Kourkouas, '... became unrivalled in matters of war, and established many great trophies, and extended the Roman boundaries and sacked very many Agarene cities', and makes reference to his 'outstanding virtue', Skylitzes rather more drily comments that he '... overran and humbled, so it is said, the whole of Syria'.<sup>10</sup>

Nor does Skylitzes intervene in his text simply by omitting material; he also adds. He inserts link phrases that bring thematic or chronological order to the underlying narrative: phrases such as 'as was said above'; 'but these things happened before'.<sup>11</sup> He also appends explanations for particular courses of action or individual motives. In a passage relating to Bulgarian attacks on the palace of Theodora and a Byzantine military riposte led by one Saktikios, the commander of the Exkoubitores, Skylitzes explains that the palace was burned because there was nothing else in the way; Saktikios' initial success in attacking the Bulgars is attributed to the fact that most of the Bulgars were away raiding the surrounding countryside for supplies. Neither explanation appears in the text of Theophanes Continuatus.<sup>12</sup> Another addition deployed widely by Skylitzes is the embroidering of prosopographical detail (names, titles, offices) without supporting evidence from root sources. This is a phenomenon that has been noted by others in conjunction with Skylitzes' ninth-century

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δομέστικον ἤδη προβεβλημένον τῶν σχολῶν τῆς ἀνατολῆς παρὰ Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ πολλὰ τρόπαια στήσαντα κατὰ τῶν ἐφ' ὧν Σαρακηνῶν, καὶ τὸν τε τῆς Ταρσοῦ ἀμυρᾶν Καραμώνην καὶ Χαμβδᾶν τὸν τοῦ Χάλεπ καὶ τὸν Τριπόλεως Ἰζήθ ὀλοσχερῶς ταπεινώσαντα, πέμπει κατὰ τῶν ἐν Κρήτῃ Σαρακηνῶν, πλῆθος ἐπιλέκτων στρατιωτῶν ἐπιδοὺς αὐτῷ καὶ στόλον κατηρτισμένον καλῶς (Skyl., 249): Nikephoros in the accusative case in bold.

<sup>9</sup> Theoph. Cont., 423–4; Skyl., 229.

<sup>10</sup> Theoph. Cont., 426–9; Skyl., 230.

<sup>11</sup> Skyl., 229; for further discussion of link phrases in synoptic history as signs of active editing see E. Jeffreys *et al.*, eds., *Studies in John Malalas* (Sydney, 1990), 21. On Skylitzes' fondness for such devices see J. Shepard, 'Byzantium's last Sicilian expedition: Skylitzes' testimony', *RSBN* 14–16 (1977–9), 147–8.

<sup>12</sup> Skyl., 216; Theoph. Cont., 402–3.



testimony.<sup>13</sup> It is an observation that also clearly applies to Skylitzes' tenth-century material. As Alexander Kazhdan noted, Skylitzes is the first historian to record the family name Lekapenos in connection with Romanos I and his family. In Theophanes Continuatus he is simply called 'Romanos'; in other tenth-century texts he is identified as 'Romanos the Elder'.<sup>14</sup> Further examples of Skylitzes' fondness for embellishing the personal details of the main characters in his narrative include awarding titles out of thin air. In Skylitzes' hands, Bardas Boilas, a rebellious *strategos* of Chaldia, becomes a *patrikios*. During Byzantine military actions against the emirate of Melitene, Melias, the leader of a brigade of Armenian troops, is given the additional title *magistros*.<sup>15</sup> Besides addition, another striking authorial intervention on Skylitzes' part is a conspicuous fondness for homogenizing. This is particular true of administrative vocabulary. One example: where Theophanes Continuatus uses the specialist term *topoteretes*, to describe a senior officer within the *tagmata* of the imperial army during the early tenth century, Skylitzes substitutes the rather more generalized *tagmatarchon*.<sup>16</sup>

The area of Skylitzes' text where all these re-shapings — omissions, additions and homogenizing — are most visible is in his military narratives. On the one hand the military material, in particular descriptions of long-term campaigns and more complicated battle sequences, is routinely the victim of brutal compression or simple omission. Theophanes Continuatus describes the fall of the eastern emirate of Melitene to imperial forces in 934 by enumerating Byzantines tactics, siege equipment, and negotiations with the emir. Skylitzes summarizes the twists and turns of the drama in a single bland phrase: 'having confined those inside by siege he [Kourkouas] compelled them to look for agreements'.<sup>17</sup> Skylitzes' treatment of the aftermath of the invasion of the Rus in 941 is a comparable example. In Theophanes Continuatus' account the Rus who survived the first naval battle are shown crossing over to Bithynia on the Asian side of the Bosphoros. The Byzantine general Bardas Phokas is then deputed to shadow the Rus as they foraged for supplies. After forays with Phokas' advance party and the main Byzantine army led by John Kourkouas, the

<sup>13</sup> D. Polemis, 'Some cases of erroneous identification in the Chronicle of Skylitzes', *BSI* 26 (1975), 74–81.

<sup>14</sup> A. Kazhdan, 'The formation of Byzantine family names in the ninth and tenth centuries', *BSI* 58 (1997), 90.

<sup>15</sup> Skyl., 213, 217, 224; Theoph. Cont., 399, 404, 416. One reason why Skylitzes awards titles out of thin air could be that he tries to grant officials the rank he believed they deserved on the basis of comparative evidence from elsewhere in the underlying text he is using. Thus, Bardas Boilas is probably given the title *patrikios* because other *strategoi* during the reign of Romanos, such as the commander Bardas Phokas, were described as having this title by Theophanes Continuatus (Theoph. Cont., 424).

<sup>16</sup> Theoph. Cont., 400; Skyl., 214.

<sup>17</sup> Skyl., 224; Theoph. Cont., 415–16.

Rus decide to sail home, driven out of the empire by a lack of supplies and the onset of winter. Skylitzes' version of this passage of events is much shorter and takes place in a geographical and temporal vacuum. In the 'Synopsis' no mention is made of the location of Bithynia, of the orders given to Bardas Phokas, or of the time of year that the Rus withdrew. However, it is interesting to note that the passage of action that Skylitzes does retain in greater detail is the catalogue of colourful outrages, including impalings and crucifixions, that the Rus inflicted on those Byzantines they encountered.<sup>18</sup>

Skylitzes may of course retain such cinematic detail to titillate his audience. Indeed, throughout his treatment of military episodes Skylitzes displays a conspicuous desire to entertain, above all when he amplifies mundane narratives with generalized comments of a heroic nature. However, whether Skylitzes is adding to his tales of derring-do or abbreviating tedious details of strategy, it is striking that his chief tactic, as with administrative terms, is to employ a general and homogenous vocabulary. Indeed from his testimony of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos it is possible to compile a list of terms which he uses very frequently, a catalogue which could be described as Skylitzes' military lexicon. These have the effect of suppressing the uniqueness of the events in question, erasing specific detail, and transforming each military engagement into a string of impenetrable stereotypes. Thus, in Skylitzes' text the joining of two sides in battle is frequently represented by the phrase *συμπλοκῆς γενομένης*.<sup>19</sup> One of the protagonists, particularly in a hand to hand engagement, is always likely to be mortally wounded (*[πληγὴν] καιρίαν δὲ τυπεῖς*).<sup>20</sup> A protagonist will conduct a siege with or without care (*ἐπιμελῶς/ἀμελῶς ἐπολιόρκει*).<sup>21</sup> The recipients of a siege always resist with spirit (*εὐψύχως τὴν πολιορκίαν ἐδέξατο*),<sup>22</sup> until the protagonist presses them too hard (*στενοχωρήσας*).<sup>23</sup> When they surrender it is usually because they are in need (*τῇ ἐνδείᾳ*) of essential supplies.<sup>24</sup> Camps are always established (*στρατόπεδον πῆξας*).<sup>25</sup> Those encamped will often scour the surrounding countryside for booty or spoils (*ἐπὶ διαρπαγὴν σκύλων*).<sup>26</sup> The term *ἐνέδρα* is preferred when denoting an ambush.<sup>27</sup> Those who triumph in battle always

<sup>18</sup> Skyl., 229; Theoph. Cont., 424–5.

<sup>19</sup> Skyl., 216.

<sup>20</sup> Skyl., 214.

<sup>21</sup> Skyl., 218.

<sup>22</sup> Skyl., 218.

<sup>23</sup> Skyl., 224.

<sup>24</sup> Skyl., 218.

<sup>25</sup> Skyl., 219.

<sup>26</sup> Skyl., 216.

<sup>27</sup> Skyl., 214.

do so easily (ῥαδίως).<sup>28</sup> Equally their triumph is often achieved with unstoppable strength (ῥύμη ἀνυποστάτω).<sup>29</sup> Those who chose to rebel often 'hole up' at a well-fortified castle (φοῦριον ἐρυμνόν).<sup>30</sup>

*The rhetoric of synopsis: Skylitzes and military manuals*

The discussion thus far enumerates some of the most obvious diagnostic features that emerge from a very detailed investigation of the structures of Skylitzes' *Synopsis*. The next important task is to make sense of these results. In 1998 at a small colloquium in Oxford Charlotte Roueché suggested that one way of reading and understanding Skylitzes' *Synopsis* was to consider it as a rhetorical production.<sup>31</sup> This approach, she indicated, would entail assessing the level of rhetorical training that both Skylitzes and his potential audience had received. Her advice was that we should compare narratives such as Skylitzes' with the advice given by those rhetorical texts that all educated Byzantines would have read: the *progymnasmata* of authors such as Hermogenes and Aphthonios, texts that tell their reader how to write basic narratives.<sup>32</sup> The analysis that follows represents an initial foray into thinking about how Skylitzes' text might or might not make sense when placed under a rhetorical microscope of this nature.

The modern reader of the *Synopsis Historion*, accustomed to chastizing Skylitzes for inaccurate empirical data, may be surprised to learn that, while Skylitzes' methods and data disappoint modern historians, his historical synthesis may have met with a rather more sympathetic response from his contemporary eleventh-century audience. The question of narrative or *diegesis* provides a starting point for this assertion. According to authors of Byzantine rhetorical handbooks, conciseness and clarity were consistently expected of those who wrote narratives.<sup>33</sup> When read in these Byzantine terms Skylitzes' text clearly fulfils at least some of these demands. In his introduction Skylitzes indicates his desire to achieve conciseness: *syntomia*.<sup>34</sup> As the earlier analysis of his testimony of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos indicates, this is an ambition that is pursued actively in the text. Clarity too, taken in a strictly Byzantine sense, proves to be another of Skylitzes' ambitions and achievements. For Byzantine

<sup>28</sup> Skyl., 214.

<sup>29</sup> Skyl., 214.

<sup>30</sup> Skyl., 226.

<sup>31</sup> This colloquium was held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford on 14 February 1998, organized by Elizabeth Jeffreys, James Howard-Johnston, and Catherine Holmes.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the discussion on Kekaumenos by Charlotte Roueché elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>33</sup> See especially the discussion of *diegesis* in G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike, 1973), chap. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Skyl., 3.

rhetoricians clarity was synonymous with the avoidance of obscurity.<sup>35</sup> Obscurity could, of course, mean many different things. But one of the principal causes of obscurity among historians, so rhetoricians claimed, was the use of an annalistic structure.<sup>36</sup> This was thought to cause confusion because a yearly organizing principle precipitated disorder: events were mentioned, then abandoned, only to be taken up again later. In this respect it is striking that, despite claiming the ninth-century annalistic historians George the Synkellos and Theophanes as his models, Skylitzes himself shunned their organizing approach in his own text. Instead, in the hope of achieving a Byzantine notion of clarity, Skylitzes followed a thematic structure throughout his narrative, customarily arranging his material into chapters that deal with discrete subjects: plots at court, warfare in different overseas theatres, news of the patriarch, natural disasters. A further way in which Skylitzes follows contemporary rhetorical advice about achieving clarity is his tendency to replace technical military and administrative terms with more easily digestible synonyms. According to the tenth-century rhetorician, John Geometres, clarity was served by avoiding technical vocabulary.<sup>37</sup>

Another way of assessing Skylitzes' text in an explicitly rhetorical context is to draw attention to a key distinction in rhetorical handbooks between *diegesis* (long prose narrative) and *diegema* (shorter explanatory or illustrative narrative). In his studies of Skylitzes' eleventh-century testimony Jonathan Shepard has noted that the narrative in the *Synopsis* often oscillates between spare summary passages and more detailed but rather isolated stories that describe single episodes.<sup>38</sup> Such one-off episodes include the defence of Messina in Sicily in the early 1040s, the 1048 campaign against the Turks, the 1048–9 battles against the Pechenegs, and Isaac Komnenos' coup of 1057.<sup>39</sup> The intrusion into Skylitzes' treatment of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos of the long narrative passage about the deposition of the patriarch Tryphon appears to be another episode of this variety. Meanwhile several comparable narratives appear in Skylitzes' coverage of the reign of Basil II: the cunning defence of Nikaia by Nikephoros Erotikos during the first revolt of the general Bardas Skleros;<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Kustas, *Byzantine Rhetoric*, 77.

<sup>36</sup> Kustas, *Byzantine Rhetoric*, 79.

<sup>37</sup> Kustas, *Byzantine Rhetoric*, 90.

<sup>38</sup> The articles in question are: J. Shepard, 'John Mauropous, Leo Tornices and an alleged Russian army: the chronology of the Pecheneg crisis of 1048–9', *JÖB* 24 (1975), 61–79; *idem*, 'Byzantium's last Sicilian expedition'; *idem*, 'Isaac Comnenus' coronation day', *BSI* 38 (1977), 22–30; *idem*, 'Skylitzes on Armenia in the 1040s and the role of Catacalon Cecaumenus', *REArm* (1975–6), 296–311; *idem*, 'Byzantinorussica', 211–25; 'A suspected source of Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historiarum*: the great Catacalon Cecaumenus', *BMGS* 16 (1992), 171–81.

<sup>39</sup> Shepard, 'Byzantium's last Sicilian expedition', 155–8; 'Skylitzes on Armenia', 270–9; 'A suspected source', 172–6.

<sup>40</sup> Skyl., 323.

Basil's heavy defeat at the hands of the Bulgars in 986;<sup>41</sup> Skleros' escape from exile in Baghdad towards the end of the same year;<sup>42</sup> Nikephoros Ouranos' victory over the Bulgarian tsar Samuel in 996/7;<sup>43</sup> the Byzantine triumph over the Bulgarians in 1014;<sup>44</sup> the surrender of the Bulgarian royal family and the principal Bulgar commanders to Basil in 1018;<sup>45</sup> Eumathios Daphnomeles' capture of the Bulgarian general Ibatzes at the time of the annexation of Bulgaria.<sup>46</sup>

If it is possible to construe such occasional but detailed narratives as *diegemata*, then one must ask what purpose they play within Skylitzes' text as a whole. One suggestion is that these narrative episodes could belong in a didactic context, as proposed recently by Stamatina McGrath. In her study of Byzantine historians' treatment of the Bulgarian wars of the tenth-century emperor John Tzimiskes McGrath looked at closely at Skylitzes' testimony. She noted that Skylitzes' narrative of Tzimiskes' final battle against the forces of the Rus on the Lower Danube at Dristra is remarkable for its vague and generalized nature, observations that tally closely with my reading of his treatment of military matters in the reign of Romanos Lekapenos. McGrath's explanation for his bland rendering of martial affairs is that Skylitzes was writing with an educative rather than descriptive purpose in mind. In this sense Skylitzes' handling of military matters was not about individual events or people in recorded time or place, but about the articulation of general military principles exemplified in narrative action. Indeed, McGrath locates histories even more firmly within a didactic context when she suggests that these works can be usefully seen as the literary complements of another genre of educative text, military manuals. McGrath argues, for example, that historians often turned to descriptions of warfare in military manuals when they wanted to add verisimilitude to their martial accounts.<sup>47</sup> If McGrath is correct in her didactic reading of historical texts such as that of Skylitzes, then the military *diegemata* that surface in the *Synopsis* would make best sense not as stories significant to the history of the times they describe, but instead as rhetorical tools that serve contemporary educative aims.

McGrath's innovative analysis of Middle Byzantine historiography in didactic contexts suggests that it might be profitable to make further comparisons between synopses such as Skylitzes' and their putative

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<sup>41</sup> Skyl., 330–31.

<sup>42</sup> Skyl., 332–4.

<sup>43</sup> Skyl., 341–2.

<sup>44</sup> Skyl., 348–9.

<sup>45</sup> Skyl., 357–61.

<sup>46</sup> Skyl., 361–3.

<sup>47</sup> S. McGrath, 'The battles of Dorostolon (971): rhetoric and reality', in T.S. Miller and J. Nesbitt, eds., *Peace and War in Byzantium: essays in honor of George T. Dennis* (Washington, D.C. 1995), 152–64.

complement, military handbooks. In what follows I will set the observations I have already made about the structures of Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historion* against two siege-warfare tracts by a single anonymous tenth-century author recently edited by Denis Sullivan: the *Parangelmata Poliorcetica*, a treatise concerned with the building of siege machines, and the *Geodesia*, a text about measuring distances during siege warfare.<sup>48</sup>

The most obvious result of this comparative exercise is that Skylitzes' *Synopsis* and the two military handbooks display some superficial similarities in content. Sullivan himself notes the frequent occasions when practices and machines outlined in the military manuals have obvious parallels within histories.<sup>49</sup> However, it seems to me that rather than a strong overlap in content the more striking similarity between the two genres is a marked commonality in *process*, in how both types of texts were constructed. In the introductory remarks to his two military treatises the anonymous tenth-century author expresses very similar thoughts to Skylitzes about source materials, working methods and style. Our author claims that he will simplify older authors to make them more accessible; he criticizes earlier writers for being difficult to grasp (*akatalepton*). He claims that his account, in contrast, will be easy to grasp (*eulepton*).<sup>50</sup> The sense of a graspable account is also present in Skylitzes' introduction where he claims that he will provide a short account (*katalepsis*, literally, 'grasp') of history.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, it is noteworthy that, like Skylitzes, the author of the poliorcetic manuals intends his texts for a mixed audience of experts and non-experts: they will be easy surveys for experts but also interesting for those who stumble upon them serendipitously, for students of geometry and for those new to the subject of mathematics.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover, within the main body of the siege-warfare texts, there are striking similarities to Skylitzes' narrative. Like Skylitzes, the compiler of the military tracts works predominantly from a single underlying source, but intrudes additional material where necessary.<sup>53</sup> Like Skylitzes, there is much verbatim copying, yet verbatim copying leavened with small additions. Link phrases that enhance thematic integrity, such as 'as mentioned above', 'as stated earlier', and even 'as mentioned in the

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<sup>48</sup> D.F. Sullivan, *Siegecraft: two tenth-century instructional manuals by "Heron of Byzantium"* (Washington D.C., 2000).

<sup>49</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, especially the discussion on pp.15–21 and the commentary.

<sup>50</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 27, 116 (a term cited in the introduction to both siege-warfare texts).

<sup>51</sup> Skyl., 3–4.

<sup>52</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, vii, 4–5, 116–18, 126.

<sup>53</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 5–6; the author explicitly states that this is his method in the introduction to the *Parangelmata Poliorcetica*, where he notes that his primary source will be Apollodoros, but that he will add secondary examples where necessary (Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 28–30).

previous treatise' (in the case of the *Geodesia*) are frequent.<sup>54</sup> In a similar fashion to Skylitzes, the author of these texts also intrudes clarificatory statements without support from the underlying account he employs.<sup>55</sup> As Sullivan notes, our author is fond of changing or adding to directional information.<sup>56</sup> Interventions of this variety are also characteristic of Skylitzes' narrative.<sup>57</sup> Like Skylitzes, the author of the military manuals sometimes scatters generalizing summary passages about his text. Sometimes these summaries are his alone,<sup>58</sup> sometimes summaries of summaries contained in the root source.<sup>59</sup>

Equally the author of the siege-warfare tracts tries to simplify and homogenize terms that he thinks his contemporary audience will find too difficult or archaic: thus swing beams (*kelonia*) are dumbed down to the more general *tauta ... katerchomena* ('those things which come down').<sup>60</sup> Like Skylitzes he also generalizes the titles of army officers. In the concluding chapter to the *Parangelmata Poliorcetica* he refers to those generals who might use the siege machines he has described in battle against contemporary adversaries, in particular the Agarenes (Muslims), by using the abstract term: *exarchontes ton strateumatikon*.<sup>61</sup> Yet, just as with Skylitzes, we are left uncertain about what simplification actually means; like Skylitzes, the siege-warfare author retains some complex syntax: subjunctives, duals, third person commands, elements that demand a reasonable understanding of Atticizing Greek on the part of author and audience.<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting similarity between these texts and those of Skylitzes is the appearance of passages of text that could be construed as explanatory, illustrative, or merely entertaining, *diegemata*. One example of an illustrative nature occurs after a series of general chapters dealing with the construction and deployment of battering rams. At this point the author

<sup>54</sup> For the general point, see Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 6-7; for examples, see 60-61, 114; for a cross reference to yet another treatise, about sundials, compiled by the anonymous author of these tracts, see 146.

<sup>55</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 64, 82, 86,

<sup>56</sup> For the general point, see Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 6-7; for examples, see 88.

<sup>57</sup> For example, Theophanes Continuatus attributes the victory of the Bulgarians over the Byzantines at Pegai during the early years of the reign of Romanos Lekapenos to the fact that the troops of the Tsar Symeon were able to charge down upon their adversaries from a height (*anorthen*); Skylitzes replaces this directional term with another (*ekeithen*, 'from there'; Skyl., 215; Theoph. Cont., 401).

<sup>58</sup> For example, chap. 21 of *Parangelmata Poliorcetica*; the first sentence of chap. 45; chap. 58 (Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 56, 90, 112).

<sup>59</sup> For example, chap. 26 of *Parangelmata Poliorcetica*, (Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 64).

<sup>60</sup> For the general point see Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 8; for the cited example, 66.

<sup>61</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 112.

<sup>62</sup> As noted by Sullivan who expresses surprise at the elevated register and complexity of the author's prose (Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 6).

includes an illustration excerpted from a martial text outside the tradition of Apollodoros. This chapter, describing the ram of Hegetor, the longest known ram in history, is taken from Athenaeus Mechanicus' *Peri Mechanematon*.<sup>63</sup> Similar illustrative material is intruded later in the text. After a long abstract description of siege towers, our author then stops to dwell on two particular examples, the towers of Diades and Charias.<sup>64</sup>

Such striking similarities in compositional method between tenth-century military manuals and later eleventh-century historical synopses point to some obvious conclusions. The similarities suggest that very different genres of literary production could be informed by shared writing methods, and that those methods were themselves based on rhetorical prescriptions widely accepted and practised by contemporary authors and well understood by their intended audiences. However, what is perhaps more interesting than the simple fact that these apparently very different texts shared the same method of composition, is the reason for this phenomenon. Part of the explanation lies in another characteristic common to both genres of text: whether historical synopsis or military manual, both represent the abridgement, simplification, and occasionally synthesis, of pre-existing texts. In these circumstances, one might suggest that it is by identifying and analysing the component parts of the fundamental structures of such abridged, simplified and synthetic texts we can begin to isolate the rhetoric that was considered by contemporaries to be appropriate for synopsis. This is, of course, purely a hypothesis, awaiting further research into other manifestations of synoptic literature in Byzantium. However, if this suggestion is plausible, it may help us not only to understand more about how an awareness of the processes of rhetorical techniques can make sense of literature in Byzantium, but how literature can make sense of rhetoric. Synoptic literature is a repetitive form that strikes the modern eye and ear as essentially unexciting and conservative. However, close reading of such texts can provide an important means of observing the symbiotic relationship between rhetoric and literature, and another way of understanding how written culture was produced in Byzantium.

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<sup>63</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 62–4, 202.

<sup>64</sup> Sullivan, *Siegecraft*, 72–80, 208–14.





## 14. George Akropolites' rhetoric

Ruth Macrides

George Akropolites is not the first name that springs to mind when considering the role of rhetoric in Byzantine writing.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the two writers on either side of him, Niketas Choniates and George Pachymeres, Akropolites did not produce quantities of epideictic literature, nor did he compose *progymnasmata*.<sup>2</sup> In addition to his *History*, for which he is best known, he has left only a small number of the kinds of works which, it is said, were the areas of the greatest rhetorical expression in the middle ages — letters, panegyrics, religious disputes.<sup>3</sup> His small corpus includes only one oration (a funeral speech for the emperor John III Vatatzes) a couple of poems, one letter, two treatises on the Procession of the Holy Spirit, and two shorter theological works.<sup>4</sup> To this can be added two works he himself mentions but which are not extant: verse prayers on Michael Palaiologos' victorious entry into Constantinople on 15 August 1261,<sup>5</sup> and an oration for the same emperor, also from 1261.<sup>6</sup>

Certainly, like all Byzantine writers, Akropolites had been educated in the rules and forms of rhetoric. This education he received in Asia Minor, under the patronage of the emperor John III. As Akropolites put it, 'It is

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<sup>1</sup> See the statement by H. Hunger, in *HPL*, vol. 1, 446: 'Akropolites, der rhetorischen Schwulst im Geschichtswerk vermeidet und nur gelegentlich einem Tropos zulässt'.

<sup>2</sup> *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten (Berlin and New York, 1972); for Pachymeres' *progymnasmata*, see C.N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (1204–ca. 1310)* (Nicosia, 1982), 61.

<sup>3</sup> G.A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (London, 1980), 24.

<sup>4</sup> Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg), vol. 2. I do not include in this small corpus of writings the 'verses for the tomb of the *despoina* Eirene Komnene by the *megas logariastes*' (*Opera*, vol. 2, 3–7; reedited by W. Hörandner, 'Prodromos-Reminiszenzen bei Dichtern der Nikänischen Zeit', *BF* 4 [1972], 89–93 [text], 93–8 [commentary]). The ascription of authorship to Akropolites is based on weak evidence, as Hörandner (pp. 97–8) himself concedes: that is, Akropolites' acquaintance with the empress and the repetition of the word 'Edem' in this poem and in another work by him.

<sup>5</sup> Discussed by Wolfram Hörandner elsewhere in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> Akropolites (ed. Heisenberg), vol. 1, 186.5–28; 188.19–28 (hereafter *History*).

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from him that we received learning (*tous logous*) and became what we are now'.<sup>7</sup> In his *History* he records the names of his teachers and the curriculum he studied. His secondary education he received in Latin-occupied Constantinople,<sup>8</sup> an instruction about which nothing is known, not even the language in which it was conducted. But his higher education he began in Asia Minor, under Theodore Hexapterygos. This man was, according to Akropolites,

not very learned in philosophy but good at declaiming, since he had dwelt extensively on rhetorical language and had studied skilful expression and was considered worthy of great fame because of this. After he had elucidated poetry for us and had taught the art of words, I, and those who with me were being initiated in the study of logic, went to Nikephoros Blemmydes ...<sup>9</sup>

Akropolites' entire career, which spanned the reigns of three emperors and two dynasties, required the exercise of skills in expression, as a *grammatikos* or imperial secretary, as an ambassador, as a *megas logothetes*, drafting documents and presiding over a court, and as a teacher of philosophy.<sup>10</sup>

But today he is known not so much in any of these capacities as he is for his *History*, our main narrative account of the period 1204–61. Written some time after 1261, in Constantinople, it presents the history of the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople from the point of view of the so-called empire of Nicaea, the successor state that restored Constantinople to Byzantine rule.

If it could be claimed that historical writing in general is not an area of rhetorical development, then this is especially so for Akropolites' *History*. Akropolites' narrative works on us as a straight, unembellished, sober account.<sup>11</sup> It appears to be orderly and undisturbed. The rhythm of his

<sup>7</sup> Funeral oration for the emperor John Vatatzes: *Opera*, vol. 2, 19.29–32.

<sup>8</sup> *History*, 46.12–15.

<sup>9</sup> *History*, 49.23–50.4 (all translations are my own). For Hexapterygos' model texts for teaching rhetoric, see W. Hörandner, 'Die Progymnasmata des Theodoros Hexapterygos', in W. Hörandner, J. Koder, O. Kresten, E. Trapp, eds., *BYZANTIOS, Festschrift für Herbert Hunger* (Vienna, 1984), 147–62. For Blemmydes as a teacher, see J. Munitiz, *Nikephoros Blemmydes, A Partial Account* (Louvain, 1988), 71–2.

<sup>10</sup> *History*, 79.1–7; 91.1–5 (*grammatikos*); 92.3–6; 175.26–176.2 (ambassador); 130.6–12 (drafting documents); *History*, 131.7; *Opera*, vol. 2, 67.8–9 (presiding over a court; a teacher). In addition to these references to his functions and activities from his own work, there is evidence from other sources which attests to the same activities.

<sup>11</sup> See *HPL*, vol. 1, 444: 'Wohltuend empfindet der moderne Leser an Georgios Akropolites eine gewisse Nüchternheit und einen Hang zur knappen präzisen Darstellung'; G. Cankova-Petkova, 'Einige Tendenzen in der byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung des

prose is rarely interrupted by classical or biblical citations.<sup>12</sup> We need only think of Choniates' and Pachymeres' histories, with their complex structures, jumbled-up chronologies and difficult Greek,<sup>13</sup> to see Akropolites as uncomplicated and, therefore, according to some, as relatively un-rhetorical.

Furthermore, an aspect of the *History* which dissuades readers from looking for its artistry is its centrality to our knowledge of thirteenth-century political history. The reader does not treat it as literature because it has too much important information. We need its meaning to be plain. Therefore, we assert that Akropolites expresses his meaning plainly.

Akropolites makes it easy for us to think this. His presentation of events is organized according to two principles — chronology and geography. He follows these guides without deviation, clearly and explicitly, informing readers of what he is doing. Phrases such as, 'The account will relate what happened after this, at the appropriate time',<sup>14</sup> keep the reader straight. He recapitulates and reminds, 'When, as the narrative related ...' or 'But my account springs forward again to the emperor Theodore Laskaris'.<sup>15</sup> As well as this chronological sequence, Akropolites follows a geographical organization for his narrative, alternating between affairs in the east, in Asia Minor, and in the west, in Constantinople and the Balkans. As Akropolites says in one of his transitional sentences:

The course of the history turns to another road and will make clear events in the city of Constantine. Since at that time affairs were in a fragmented state because rule was shared by many everywhere, the narrative also must twist along in a complex manner.<sup>16</sup>

The subject of his *History* suggests the structure.

This is not to say that Akropolites' *History* shows few signs of the training he received from Hexapterygos and Blemmydes. Akropolites likes to play with words. He uses alliteration, metaphor, anaphora,

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13. Jahrhundert, widerspiegelt in den Werken des Niketas Choniates, Georgios Akropolites und Theodoros Skuthariotes', *Byzantinobulgarica* 6 (1980), 89–90.

<sup>12</sup> For his citations, see the *History*, 'Locī laudatī', 313.

<sup>13</sup> A. Failler, 'Chronologie et composition dans l'histoire de Georges Pachymères', *REB* 38 (1980), 5–103 and *REB* 39 (1981), 145–249. No one has yet done similar work for Choniates' *History* but for his imagery see A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1984), chap. 7, 256–86.

<sup>14</sup> *History*, 24.12.

<sup>15</sup> *History*, 26.10–11.

<sup>16</sup> *History*, 57.16–20.

irony.<sup>17</sup> He recreates scenes vividly. The following example combines word-play with description. Eudokia, daughter of the emperor Alexios III, fled from Constantinople in 1204 with her husband, the emperor Alexios V Mourtzouphlos, to Mosynopolis where her father was then living, having himself fled the city many months earlier. Thus two fugitive emperors confronted each other. Akropolites relates how Alexios III loathed Alexios Mourtzouphlos. However,

playing the part of an in-law, he welcomed Alexios and, preparing a bath, enjoined him to bathe together with his daughter. When Alexios was in the bath, servants of the emperor Alexios burst in on him suddenly and there gouged out his eyes. Those who were there said that the daughter, standing by the door of the bath (λουτρόν), showered abuse on her father (ὑβρεσιν ἐπλυνε).<sup>18</sup>

Akropolites also uses well-placed and well-chosen anecdotes to create a picture of a person's character. The anecdotes usually draw attention to, and flesh out, negative qualities in an individual. So it is, for example, that Demetrios, son of Theodore Komnenos Doukas of Epiros, is characterized by Akropolites as one who:

associated with silly youths and had much in common with them and was licentious in sexual acts and frequented married women, with the result that once a serious accident befell him. When the husband of the adulterous woman suddenly entered [the room], Demetrios tried to escape from the window but, as he fell from a great height he struck his buttock ... he recovered, although he limped a little in one of his legs and did not walk evenly.<sup>19</sup>

Akropolites' knowledge of the elements of deliberative and judicial oratory are evident in the carefully constructed arguments of the speeches he creates for certain people. Manglavites, a prominent inhabitant of Melnik, then under Bulgarian rule, addressed the people of the town, openly proposing that they submit to the emperor of Nicaea, John III. They had a choice between the rule of a child — which is to have

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<sup>17</sup> The following is a random sample: word-play: τελεώτερον/ἐτελοῦντο (*History*, 50.5,6); πρόχειρος ... ἐκ τοῦ προχείρου (*History* 72.3,4); ἦν λόγος, ἄνευ λόγου (*History*, 99.11); τῆς ὥρας ἄωρον (*History*, 128.13–14); oxymoron: νικᾷ ... ἐξηττημένος (*History*, 17.14); katachresis: τῇ κλίνῃ προσπεπαταλευμένος (*History*, 47.1); omoioleuton: *History*, 157.6–8; irony: πρᾶγμα θαυμάσιον (*History*, 127.24–5); metaphor: *History*, 157.5–11; anaphora: ἡμιθνής ... ἡμίξηρος (*History*, 46.24); alliteration: *History*, 105.11–12; 130.17–18.

<sup>18</sup> *History*, 9.15–22.

<sup>19</sup> *History*, 71.4–12.

no master — or the rule of the Emperor John III who is trustworthy, knows a good man from a bad one and finally, and most convincingly, has a long-standing right to Melnik. And this for three reasons: Melnik belonged to the Romans before the Bulgarians greedily came to possess it; the inhabitants of Melnik are pure Romans by birth, because they originated in Philippopolis; but even if they are Bulgarians, the emperor has a right with respect to them because his son is married to the daughter of a former Bulgarian ruler, Asan, and she is called *despoina* of the Romans. The speech of Manglavites, like others Akropolites constructs, closes with a maxim: 'the yoke of a sensible and mature emperor is good and lighter than that of those who are still youths'.<sup>20</sup>

As these few examples show, it is not that Akropolites' narrative is devoid of the tricks of the trade. Rather it is the case that their distribution is measured — measured, orderly, detached until, that is, he comes to tell the story of three people, two emperors and their servant, Theodore II Laskaris, Michael VIII Palaiologos and George Akropolites. When it comes to these three, the pulse of the narrative quickens, figures of speech are piled on, panegyric and invective are paired, deviations from the orderly, chronological narrative are made.

Let us begin with Michael Palaiologos, because Akropolites does. Even before Theodore II, who ruled from 1254–8, is introduced into the narrative, Michael Palaiologos appears through references to his family. His father, Andronikos Palaiologos, *megas domestikos* of the emperor John III, is mentioned eight times in the narrative, far more than any other single person, apart from individual emperors. Each time he is mentioned we are reminded: 'Andronikos Palaiologos whom I have often mentioned', or he is praised, 'first among those appointed to command, an intelligent and gentle man, well-experienced in battle and in directing people in times of war and peace'.<sup>21</sup> Andronikos' advice to the emperor to attack the Bulgarians is quoted in full and pronounced excellent.<sup>22</sup> Thus, when Michael himself makes his first appearance in the narrative we already know something about his past and we are immediately told about his future.

To guard Melnik and Serres ... he left the eldest son of the *megas domestikos*, Michael Komnenos, whom some years later the imperial office of the Romans enriched to its own good fortune and honour.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *History*, 76.11–77.9.

<sup>21</sup> *History*, 45.22–4; 83.19–22; 84.3; also, 55.17–19; 66.16–18; 73.25–6; 90.5–6; 93.10–11; 162.9–12.

<sup>22</sup> *History*, 73.25–74.14.

<sup>23</sup> *History*, 84.1–6.

This foreknowledge of his future role as emperor is presented to the reader just before the trial scene of 1253. The latter is the longest narrative devoted to one event up to this point in the *History*.<sup>24</sup> It is one of the few descriptions of a trial in Byzantine literature and, as a trial in which the ordeal by hot iron is mentioned, it is much discussed.<sup>25</sup>

Michael was on trial for treason but Akropolites never mentions the word. He obfuscates the accusation.<sup>26</sup> Akropolites could not avoid a discussion of the trial but he turns it to Michael's advantage by using it as an opportunity to display Michael's wit, 'nobility of spirit', and popularity. Akropolites declares his innocence from the start: 'he had the truth helping him'.<sup>27</sup> He compares Michael to statues by Pheidias and Praxiteles, and paintings of fearless warriors.<sup>28</sup> He gives Michael clever lines to deliver on three occasions.<sup>29</sup> Word-play is not absent from this account.<sup>30</sup> Akropolites who rarely refers to God in his *History* invokes Him often in the trial scene.

For since God intended to raise him to the imperial eminence, he tried him with the fire of torture and by the test of the smelting-furnace so that when he should ascend the imperial throne he would not easily believe slander and false accusations.<sup>31</sup>

Akropolites thus evokes the ordeal by hot iron which Michael underwent metaphorically 'so that he would not easily believe slander', in implicit contrast to the emperor who brought him to trial, John III. Readers would make another comparison, too, with John's son, Theodore, who did make use of this ordeal in his reign.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *History*, 92–100.

<sup>25</sup> See G. Czebe, 'Studien zum Hochverratsprozesse des Michael Paläologos im Jahre 1252', *BNJ* 8 (1931), 59–98; M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (Oxford, 1975), 167–8; Angold, 'The interaction of Latins and Byzantines during the period of the Latin Empire (1204–1261): the case of the ordeal', *Actes du XVe congrès international des études byzantines*, vol. 4 (Athens, 1980), 1–10; D. Geanakoplos, 'Ordeal by fire and judicial duel at Byzantine Nicaea (1253): western or eastern legal influence?', in Geanakoplos, *Interaction of the 'Sibling' Byzantine and Western Cultures in the Middle Ages and Italian Renaissance (330–1600)* (New Haven and London, 1976), 146–55; D. J. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258–1282: a study in Byzantine-Latin relations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 21–6.

<sup>26</sup> Failler, 'Chronologie et composition', (1980), 11–12.

<sup>27</sup> *History*, 96.9–10.

<sup>28</sup> *History*, 96.16–18; 97.14–15.

<sup>29</sup> *History*, 96.10–19; 97.16–98.3; 98.9–14.

<sup>30</sup> *History*, 97.16, 99.11.

<sup>31</sup> *History*, 99.20–100.1; also, 97.23–4; 98.1.

<sup>32</sup> Pachymeres (ed. Failler), vol. 1, 53.28–55.10. Akropolites is silent on this matter in his *History*.

The next occasion for Akropolites to display Michael's qualities comes in the form of another potentially damaging incident in the latter's pre-imperial career: his flight to the Turks during the reign of Theodore II Laskaris.<sup>33</sup> For this, Akropolites 'broadens the scope of the account, as is necessary, for what happened to Michael Komnenos in his flight is deserving of many words'.<sup>34</sup> The Turks took one look at him and:

wondered at his appearance and spirit, and as one of the ancients says, they judged [it] 'worthy of monarchy'. From a short exchange of words with him they quickly recognised the constancy of the man; they also saw evidence of his military skill ....<sup>35</sup>

Until this point in the narrative, the only actions of Michael Palaiologos that Akropolites has recounted are dubious ones. Yet his image has been securely fixed by the speeches he made at his trial and by the opinion expressed of him by others, now even the Turks. Akropolites rarely uses classical quotations but here he produces one for Michael Palaiologos. The Turks judged him by his demeanor to be 'worthy of monarchy', citing Euripides. Other Byzantine authors who cite the phrase put the admiring expression in the mouth of an adversary.<sup>36</sup> Akropolites attributes the observation to the enemy Turks. He thus simultaneously makes the praise more impressive and removes from himself the responsibility for suggesting that Michael was worthy of the throne and this in the reign of Theodore II, while Michael was engaged in an act of questionable loyalty.

Thinking in antithetical pairs was a habit engrained in writers by rhetorical exercises.<sup>37</sup> Akropolites, it can be demonstrated, pairs Michael Palaiologos with his cousin Theodore II. He does this structurally by juxtaposing, through their exceptional length, narratives devoted to each man.

If the trial scene is the longest passage devoted to a single incident up to that point in the narrative, then the exchange between Akropolites and the emperor Theodore II is the pendant to it. For pages on end

<sup>33</sup> *History*, 134.7–136.7.

<sup>34</sup> *History*, 136.8–10.

<sup>35</sup> *History*, 136.26–137.1.

<sup>36</sup> Euripides, *Aeolus*, fr. 15: see A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1926), 367; also G. Prinzing, 'Ein Mann τυραννίδος ἄξιος. Zur Darstellung der rebellischen Vergangenheit Michaels VIII. Palaiologos', in I. Vassis, G.S. Heinrich, D.R. Reinsch, eds., *Lesarten. Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag* (Berlin and New York, 1998), 180–97.

<sup>37</sup> M. Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues: strategies of argument in later Greek rhetoric* (Oxford, 1995), 15–16.



Akropolites recounts a pointless and circular discussion he had with the emperor Theodore about a peace treaty which had been negotiated with the Bulgarian ruler.<sup>38</sup> The emperor repeatedly, and pointlessly and bad-humouredly asks Akropolites the same question: whether he thinks the rumour is true that they have been deceived and that the other party has sworn false oaths. Akropolites reports over and over that he thinks the rumour is untrue; he is however unable to satisfy the anxious emperor who finally is 'filled with boundless anger and madness, as if in a Bacchic frenzy'.<sup>39</sup> He orders Akropolites to be beaten by two club-bearers. 'He had appointed them the other day, all twenty-four of them, perhaps even on my account, so that there might be prepared a stage for the drama which was worthy of a tragedy'.<sup>40</sup> We remember Michael Palaiologos at his trial compared to classical statues and paintings of heroes. We see Theodore II disfigured by fury. When Theodore dies two years later of a terrible illness, Akropolites reports that, 'in imitation of the whore of the Gospels' (τὴν εὐαγγελικὴν πόρνην; Luke 7.38), Theodore made his confession, 'washing the ground on which he lay with great streams of tears, so that it became mud'.<sup>41</sup> A biblical reference — rare for Akropolites — a harsh and unflattering *synkrisis*, and a vivid *ekphrasis* combine to put the final touches on the portrait of Theodore II.

When Michael Palaiologos comes to the throne some months later, Akropolites describes the event with the *topos* of renewal:

You could see the Roman people of whatever rank and fortune and way of life filled with great delight and rejoicing at events. It was like someone coming out from the deepest darkness into the clearest light of the sun or from a storm into calm or from winter to spring or from a gale to stillness.<sup>42</sup>

Far from being a commonplace, a space-filler devoid of meaning, this *topos* tells readers that a transition has taken place from a turbulent tyranny to a peaceful and prosperous reign. The *topos* had last been used by Michael and Niketas Choniates of Isaac II after Andronikos I's reign of

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<sup>38</sup> *History*, 127–34.

<sup>39</sup> *History*, 130.25–8.

<sup>40</sup> *History*, 131.9–13.

<sup>41</sup> *History*, 153.8–16.

<sup>42</sup> *History*, 161.15–24.

terror.<sup>43</sup> Even if Akropolites does not have this parallel in mind, Akropolites' readers would be aware of the significance of the *topos*.<sup>44</sup>

The happy mood continues into the next passage which relates the embassy of the Latins in Constantinople to the new emperor Michael in 1259. The ambassadors made heavy demands. They were asking for something 'excessive and nigh absurd'.<sup>45</sup> First they asked for Thessalonike, requesting that the emperor hand it over to them, as well as the land as far as Constantinople itself.

The emperor, hearing such a request, made his response to them in a playful manner, saying, 'This city happens to be my native city, for my father governed there, as you know, I mean the *megas domestikos*. But it was also there that he died and his body is buried. Therefore, how can it be right for this city to be outside my empire?' When the ambassadors heard this they pricked up their ears, as if the emperor might be willing to give them part of the territory they asked for, and changing their tone they said, 'Then, O emperor, give over to us the land from Serres itself and keep the rest'. The emperor replied, 'It is not proper for me to fulfil this request either, for it was there that I was first appointed to govern territories by the late emperor, my uncle, and I first served as general in it. I love the place as home ground and so it is not right for me to let this city go either'. But the ambassadors leaped from one place to another with ease and with no preference for what they got so long as they got something. They replied, 'O emperor, give us from Boleron to our territory'. The emperor said, 'I often hunted in those parts — in fact, I more or less learned how to hunt there — and I do not consider it meet to part with this land where I will want again to hunt'.<sup>46</sup>

'Thus put to shame', Akropolites concludes, 'the ambassadors of the Latins returned home to Constantinople having accomplished nothing'.<sup>47</sup>

The exchange is playful, as Akropolites states, and once again we marvel at Michael's assured and witty manner. But Pachymeres gives us another version of this embassy which shows us just how playful Akropolites has been.

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<sup>43</sup> Niketas Choniates (ed. van Dieten), 356.29–30; *Orationes*, ed. van Dieten (as in note 2), 89.1–2; Sp. P. Lampros, *Μιχαήλ Ἀκομινάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ σωζόμενα*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1879), 210.10–211.11.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. M. Liborio, 'Rhetorical *topoi* as "clues" in Chrétien de Troyes', in B. Vickers, ed., *Rhetoric Revisited* (Binghamton, New York, 1982), 173–8.

<sup>45</sup> *History*, 162.1.

<sup>46</sup> *History*, 162.7–163.4.

<sup>47</sup> *History*, 163.15–17.

The Italians from the Great City sent ambassadors to him and he gave a truce to the war he was waging against them, so as to conclude later a stronger pact if they would fulfil certain of his proposals. But as the ambassadors were Romans, descended from Romans, he handled them with care and, although he had nothing in the City, he gave them what they demanded should he acquire it and he confirmed this with chrysobulls.<sup>48</sup>

Pachymeres' version is so very different that we can wonder whether he is in fact describing the same embassy. Here Michael promises what he does not have rather than not giving what he does have. The episode has been turned on its head. But who has done the turning? Given the patterns revealed by a study of the *History*, it is likely that Akropolites was at work.

But is it not predictable and un-newsworthy that Akropolites would favour Michael VIII in a *History* he wrote during his reign and to whom he was, furthermore, related by marriage? After all, he would not be the first writer to do so.<sup>49</sup>

Indeed, Akropolites is not unusual in writing a work favourable to the reigning emperor. But the extent and the manner of the distortion have gone undetected precisely because no one has cared to examine the facts — by facts, I mean the way in which he writes — his structure, his juxtapositions, his figures of speech and their placement in his text. His *History* is not just favourable to Michael VIII; it amounts to a defence for Michael and a prosecution of Theodore II and the Laskaris dynasty Michael overthrew. Furthermore, by his attack Akropolites aligns himself with the noble families who had been disappointed under John III and who had suffered under Theodore II.<sup>50</sup> This is all the more remarkable because Akropolites had personally only flourished under those emperors. He owed almost all he had to the emperors he denounced, his education, his position at court, his marriage to a Palaiologos and his title of *megas logothetes*,<sup>51</sup> the highest he received in his life. It was John III's

<sup>48</sup> Pachymeres, vol. 1, 149.22–151.3.

<sup>49</sup> E.g. Psellos: see A. Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden, 1999), 11 and references in n. 25; Attaleiates: see *HPL*, vol. 1, 383–4. However, M. Mullett, 'The "Other" in Byzantium', in D.C. Smythe, ed., *Strangers to Themselves: the Byzantine Outsider* (Aldershot, 2000), 5–6 and n. 26, reminds us that it is the norm for Byzantine writers of history to be 'disgraced or exiled politicians'.

<sup>50</sup> *History*, 105.3–17; 154.24–155.10. For this argument, see R. Macrides, *The History of George Akropolites*, forthcoming.

<sup>51</sup> That Akropolites was already married to a relation of Michael Palaiologos, before the latter came to the throne in 1259, can be inferred from the *History*, 164.19–21: he would have been married before he was taken prisoner by Michael II Komnenos Doukas in 1257 (*History*, 150.12–24). Akropolites is referred to as *megas logothetes* by Theodore Skoutariotes,

and Theodore II's advancement of George Akropolites that elevated him to the ranks of the noble families. Yet we have accepted Akropolites' defence of Michael and case against Theodore as if Akropolites were a victim of the latter. His picture of the thirteenth century has become our picture. To this extent his rhetoric has been successful.

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in relating an event of 1256 (ed. K.N. Sathas, *Ανωνύμου Σύνοψις Χρονική*, MB 7 [Paris, 1894], 526.9–10). On Skoutariotes' chronicle and its relationship to Akropolites' work, see R. Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', in Ch. Dendrinos, J. Harris, E. Charvalia-Crook, J. Herrin, eds., *Porphyrogenita: essays in honour of Julian Chrysostomides* (Aldershot, 2003), 63–76.



Section V  
Rhetoric and visual images



## 15. Byzantine rhetoric, Latin drama and the portrayal of the New Testament

Henry Maguire

At the end of the twelfth century the Cypriot monk Neophytos Enkleistos preached a sermon on the feast of the Annunciation. Drawing on a venerable tradition of Byzantine hymns and homilies, Neophytos praised the Virgin through a long series of metaphors, as follows:

Hail, impassable gate, through which the angel passed ...  
Hail, heavenly ladder, by means of which He who is above the heavens came down to earth ...  
Hail, spiritual paradise of the flower of incorruption.  
Hail spring rising from Eden and irrigating paradise, that is, the church of God and the congregation of the faithful ...  
Hail, 'tree of life, that is in the midst of Paradise', from which we the faithful eat the fruit for the remission of our sins.  
Hail, door of Paradise, that admits the faithful and turns aside the faithless.  
Hail, unsown field, from which sprouted the head of corn that brings life.  
Hail, vine of abundance and stem rich in fruit, which the Father planted, the Holy Spirit watered, and the Son cultivated well ...  
Hail, great and spacious sea, in which sailed the helmsman of the universe ...  
Hail, strong tower, that guards those that flee for refuge in you unharmed in the face of the enemy ...  
Hail, land flowing with milk and honey ...  
Hail, divinely abundant river ...  
Hail, holy spring.  
Hail, fount of flowing water ...  
Hail, solitude-loving turtle-dove, who has released the world from solitude.  
Hail, holy swallow, through whom the spring of salvation has come to us.  
Hail, sweet-sounding nightingale, with your clear song prophesying glory.<sup>1</sup>

Such streams of epithets were very familiar to Byzantine church-goers above all from the Akathistos Hymn, but also from many other hymns and sermons that incorporated the *chairetismoi* of the Virgin.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Tornio, ed., 'Omellie e Catechesi mariane inedite di Neofito il Recluso (1134-1220c.)', *Marianum* 36 (1974), 184-315, especially 242.69-244.117, 262.413-15.

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Even a provincial and ascetic monk such as St Neophytos, when he preached on the Annunciation, would adorn his sermon with the rich imagery of the Virgin, for the delight of his monastic audience. But Byzantine artists were more reticent than the preachers. Only exceptionally do Byzantine icons of the Annunciation attempt to illustrate the panoply of metaphors associated with the Virgin. These exceptions have become famous in modern scholarship, to the extent that their present-day fame obscures their unusual nature. Here may be cited the well-known late twelfth-century icon of the Annunciation at Mount Sinai, with its frank evocation of the fruitfulness and fecundity of nature in the spring time, with its roof garden, its nesting birds, and its river teeming with birds and fishes.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally, also, we find the illustration of architectural metaphors for the Virgin, as in a painting of the Annunciation on a twelfth-century polyptych from Mount Sinai, where there is a ladder or staircase leading up to another roof garden.<sup>3</sup> The richest collection of architectural metaphors may be the late twelfth-century fresco of the Annunciation at Lagoudera, where we see not only the staircase but also the tower which it ascends and the gate (fig. 15.1).<sup>4</sup> But, to repeat, these twelfth-century Annunciation scenes with their multiple metaphors drawn from nature and architecture are unusual. More frequently, Byzantine artists restricted themselves to a single metaphor of life or fruitfulness, such as a water basin, a tree, or a potted plant, or else they produced Annunciation scenes entirely devoid of symbolic imagery. An example of an Annunciation scene incorporating a single metaphor is the miniature in the eleventh-century lectionary manuscript on Mount Athos, Dionysiou 587, where a lone tree can be seen growing just to the left of the Virgin.<sup>5</sup> More austere still is the mosaic at Daphni, with its brilliant background of pure and uninterrupted gold (fig. 15.2). Even the illustrations of the Akathistos by and large avoided the overt images of fertility that were so richly evoked in that poem.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> H.C. Evans and W.D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium* (exhibition catalogue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 374–5, no. 246.

<sup>3</sup> D. Mouriki, 'Icons from the 12th to the 15th century', in K.A. Manaphis, ed., *Sinai: treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens, 1990), 102–24, especially 108, 158, fig. 28.

<sup>4</sup> A. Nicolaïdès, 'L'église de la Panagia Arakiotissa à Lagoudéra, Chypre: étude iconographique des fresques de 1192', *DOP* 50 (1996), 1–137, especially 69–70, fig. 60.

<sup>5</sup> Dionysiou 587, f. 150r. S. M. Pelekanidis, P.C. Christou, Ch. Tsiumis, S.N. Kadas, eds., *The Treasures of Mount Athos, Illuminated Manuscripts*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1974), 444, fig. 264.

<sup>6</sup> On the illustrations of the *Akathistos*, see A. Pätzold, *Der Akathistos-Hymnos: die Bilderzyklen in der byzantinischen Wandmalerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1989); J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'L'illustration de la première partie de l'Hymne Akathiste et sa relation avec les mosaïques de l'Enfance de la Kariye Djami', *Byzantion* 54 (1984), 648–702; T. Velmans, 'Une illustration inédite de l'Acathiste et l'iconographie des hymnes liturgiques à Byzance', *CA* 22 (1972), 131–65. The reasons for the reluctance of Byzantine artists (in contrast to their western counterparts) to illustrate the epithets of the Virgin are too complex to be explored

The fundamental relationship between Byzantine art and rhetoric lies not so much in shared metaphors as in shared techniques of narrative and dramatization. It can be said that the rhetoric of images in Byzantium took the place that liturgical plays occupied in the west; that is, both forms of narrative introduced visual drama into the liturgy. In the Byzantine church, liturgical drama never became as developed and as varied as in the west. To some extent, this was because Byzantine canonists prohibited secular entertainments such as the mime and the pantomime.<sup>7</sup> But a more fundamental barrier to the elaboration of drama by the Byzantine church was orthodox image theory, which maintained that there were true and sanctified icons for all holy figures. After the tenth century, Byzantine artists developed precise physiognomic portrait types for each major saint.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, holy persons could be portrayed in paintings according to their approved portrait types, but they could not be portrayed in plays by any individual acting in a costume. In the art of the western church the repertoire of sacred portrait types was far less extensive than in Byzantium, which made it more acceptable for actors with varied physical features to impersonate holy figures. For the Byzantine view of icons as opposed to liturgical drama, we can refer to the *Dialogue against Heresies* by the early fifteenth-century archbishop, Symeon of Thessalonike. In this text Symeon contrasted the orthodox system of sacred portraiture, which sought to provide precise physiognomic types for each major saint, with western liturgical drama, in which any actor with any physical features could impersonate a holy figure, with the aid of costumes and props. Symeon wrote:

As in a drama, [the Latins] do some things that are against the divine laws. Such as if they represent the Annunciation of the Virgin and Mother of God, and the Crucifixion of the Saviour, and so forth ... And one man represents the Virgin, and they call that man Mary's husband, while this man is called the angel, and that one the ancient of days — in whose beard they place white hairs. But ... to represent and adorn the forms of the holy through the hair and clothes of others is contrary to piety, and not permitted by the fathers ... If [the Latins] say that these things are like the divine painted images, their

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here. Crucial in any discussion will be the eighty-second canon of the Quinisext Council, that forbade artists to depict Christ in the form of a lamb (Mansi 11, 977–80). This canon, and the attitude towards symbolic imagery in art that it enshrined, may have effectively prevented Byzantine artists from exploiting the rich nature-derived metaphors of hymns and sermons; see H. Maguire, 'Profane icons. The significance of animal violence in Byzantine art', *Res* 38 (2000), 18–33, especially 31–2.

<sup>7</sup> For the attitudes of canon law towards mimes, see C. Mango, 'Daily Life in Byzantium', *JÖB* 31/1 (1981), 337–53 especially 344–51; see also S. Baud-Bovy, 'Le théâtre religieux, Byzance et l'Occident', *Hellenika* 28 (1975), 328–49, especially 345.

<sup>8</sup> See H. Maguire, *The Icons of their Bodies: saints and their images in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1996), 5–47.

statement is contrary to reason, because the image is truly in the likenesses, even the painted image of Christ ... and the Mother of God depicted in the image, and the angel, and the apostle, and the hierarch, and the martyr ... and everything in the images. The images and the paintings of divine things are august and to be venerated. But for men to imitate these things [in plays] is not righteous.<sup>9</sup>

For Symeon of Thessalonike, therefore, the only true representations of the Gospel are the holy icons that have been sanctioned by the fathers. Representations that involve actors and every-day costumes are untruthful and impious. Symeon is aware of the difficulty posed by performances of the late Byzantine office of the Three Children in the Furnace, in which three boys took the parts of the three children, and candles, lights and incense evoked the furnace. However, he is at pains to point out that in this ritual the angel lowered over the heads of the singing boys is represented by a painted icon rather than by a man:

If [the Latins] reproach us for the furnace of the three children, they should not congratulate themselves. Because we ... represent the angel in an image, and it is not a man that we send.<sup>10</sup>

Earlier Byzantine writers also criticized western liturgical drama, especially the authors of the lists of heresies of the Latins. Thus, in the thirteenth century Meletios Homologetes complained that on the Friday and Saturday of Holy Week the Latins searched bare-foot for Christ in the corners and hidden places of their churches.<sup>11</sup> This passage appears to refer to the Resurrection plays of Holy Week, where the stage directions specify that some of the actors were bare-foot.<sup>12</sup> The Easter Sepulchre that featured in these plays was described scornfully by Constantine Stilbes in his list of the errors of the Latins, which he composed around 1204. He said:

For Easter Sunday, they represent the life-giving tomb of our Lord and Saviour inside the church and form it like a cenotaph out of ordinary garments that people have been wearing. After that, they run up to it and venerate it as if it were the prototype, that is, the original tomb. Then each

<sup>9</sup> *Contra haereses*, 23; PG 155: 112C–116D.

<sup>10</sup> PG 155: 113D. On this passage, see M. M. Velimirović, 'Liturgical drama in Byzantium and Russia', *DOP* 16 (1962), 351–85, especially 352, 374–5, 379; Baud-Bovy, 'Le théâtre religieux', 333–5.

<sup>11</sup> T. Kolbaba, 'Meletios Homologetes, "On the Customs of the Italians"', *REB* 55 (1997), 137–68, especially 149.4–6, 165, n. 58; T.M. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists: errors of the Latins* (Urbana, 2000), 68.

<sup>12</sup> For example, Christ appears bare-foot in the thirteenth-century Peregrinus play from Rouen (Bibliothèque de la Ville, MS. 222): K. Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church* (Oxford, 1951), 461.

one takes his own garment and uses it to cover himself as before, thus consecrating the profane and profaning the sacred.<sup>13</sup>

So here again, the Byzantine writer objects that western drama, by using a variety of props from daily life, departs from the sanctioned prototype, in this case not the prototype of the holy portrait image, but the prototype of Christ's sepulchre.

If the Byzantines were unable to dramatize the Gospel story by means of actors, costumes, and props, they had another means at their disposal, namely the rhetoric of icons. The Byzantines developed their rhetoric of images in approximately the same time period as the first flowering of liturgical drama in the West, that is, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The techniques of rhetoric enabled the Byzantines to create a drama of images, in which the icons themselves spoke to each other and to their audience, without losing any of their fixity and good order. Through rhetoric, the Byzantines created a true drama of images, rather than a counterfeit performance of actors. To illustrate the Byzantine rhetoric of images, I will consider the techniques of *ekphrasis*, *synkrisis*, and *antithesis*.

My examples of *ekphrasis* are provided by a mosaic at Monreale, in Sicily, and by a sermon composed by the mid-twelfth-century homilist Philagathos, who preached in Greek at the cathedral of Rossano and at the court of Roger II in Palermo. In this sermon Philagathos describes the raising of the son of the Widow of Nain.<sup>14</sup> In order to engage the emotions of his audience, the homilist delivers a rhetorical lament, which is developed strictly according to the rules for monody attributed to Menander.<sup>15</sup> Philagathos did not compose the whole of this lament himself, but he lifted part of it verbatim from Gregory of Nyssa.<sup>16</sup> In introducing the long quotation, Philagathos says that he would be out of his mind if he tried to change what had been so eloquently said by the fourth-century Church Father. However, in his own sermon, Philagathos elaborated on the lament, using *ekphrasis* to give a vivid picture of the bereaved mother. He tells us that while the Widow's son was still clinging to life, she gazed at him in distraction, with her hair shorn and uncovered. But when the young man finally died, his mother went into a bacchic frenzy of grief. She tore at her hair, and scraped her cheeks with her nails, so that streams of blood and of tears flowed from her at the same time. She struck her head and chest with stones, and exposed her

<sup>13</sup> J. Darrouzès, 'Le mémoire de Constantin Stilbès contre les Latins', *REB* 21 (1963), 74.221-7; Kolbaba, *Byzantine Lists*, 68, 137.

<sup>14</sup> *Homilia* 6, 5-13; G. Rossi Taibbi, ed., *Filagato da Cerami, Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno*, vol. 1 (Palermo, 1969), 38-42.

<sup>15</sup> D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson, eds., *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford, 1981), 200-7.

<sup>16</sup> *PG* 44: 218-20.

breasts, so that she was half-naked. Philagathos tells us that the dead youth lay on his couch like a lofty pine or a cypress tree uprooted by the wind. His mother was like a bird that flies shrieking around her nest while her nestlings are seized by a serpent. In the lament, following the precepts of Menander, Philagathos contrasts her present condition with her happier past, describing the joy her son had brought her as a child. From the past, the homilist moves to her frustrated hopes for the future: she had expected to see the young man at his wedding, not at his funeral; now she was lighting torches for a burial instead of for a marriage. Philagathos was so carried away by his own eloquence that he could hardly continue speaking; indeed, he observed that the eyes of his congregation were wet with weeping. He had to order them to dry their tears so that he could finish his sermon.

In this homily, then, Philagathos draws upon the techniques of rhetoric to dramatize the Gospel narrative. The Byzantine mosaicists who illustrated the same subject a few decades later at Monreale employed similar methods to play on the emotions of the audience, but with much greater reserve (fig. 15.3).<sup>17</sup> As in Philagathos, we find the *ekphrasis* of the mother, with her hair falling loosely over her shoulders, and her arms indecorously bared — a characterization without parallel elsewhere in this church. Grief is eloquently expressed in her drawn and furrowed face, and in the expressions of her companions. One of the men carries the lamp for the funeral. Certainly, the mosaic shares the emotional tenor of the sermon, but it is toned down.

Among the rhetorical techniques that were exploited by Byzantine artists, the most important were *antithesis* and *synkrisis*, that is, contrast and comparison, the habit of thinking in pairs. Both the makers and the viewers of Byzantine works of art were accustomed to creating juxtapositions. In an *ekphrasis* of an icon of the Crucifixion, an eleventh-century observer, Michael Psellos, describes the Virgin, standing beside her crucified son:

Is not the Virgin, the Mother of the Word, the living ideal picture of the virtues? ... Her soul should almost have left her, but she did not abandon her dignity, even in her sufferings ... Rather, she seems to be pondering something hidden and unseen. Her eyes are fixed on inexpressible thoughts, as her soul reviews within her what has [formerly] befallen her, and what evils now overwhelm her.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (New York, 1950), 120, 278, pl. 86A.

<sup>18</sup> P. Gautier, ed. 'Un discours inédit de Michel Psellos sur la crucifixion,' *REB* 49 (1991), 5–66, especially 63.1344–55; partial translation in H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: a history of the image before the era of art* (Chicago, 1994), 529.

The contrast of the present with the past, or of the present with the future, was deeply ingrained in rhetorical practice, especially in the composition of laments such as that of the Widow of Nain.

Juxtapositions of Christ's infancy and death were prominent in post-iconoclastic Byzantine art and liturgy. As an example, the arrangement of the paintings in the Cappadocian church of Karanlık Kilise may be cited. Here the Nativity and the Crucifixion were placed in the centres of the south and north walls respectively (figs. 4 and 5).<sup>19</sup> The scenes are linked, among other ways, by the eloquent gesture of Mary's right hand, as she reaches out to her child. It is not my intention to dwell on such pairings here, which are now familiar in scholarship,<sup>20</sup> but only to add two further points. First, this habit of thinking in pairs was not confined to the infancy and passion, but was equally applicable to other scenes. And secondly, the techniques of *synkrisis* and *antithesis* encouraged a degree of simplification and schematization in narrative images. The pairings worked better visually if the scenes were stripped down and shorn of excessive incidental detail. Hence, perhaps paradoxically, rhetoric could become a force for abstraction in Byzantine art. Two examples will illustrate these points.

Around the year 1200, Nicholas Mesarites composed an *ekphrasis* of the mosaics in the church of the Holy Apostles. In his description, this author passed directly from the Transfiguration to the Crucifixion, skipping several episodes such as the Raising of Lazarus and the Entry into Jerusalem that had been described earlier by Constantine the Rhodian. Mesarites wrote:

But him whose glory the disciples saw just now as he was transfigured on Thabor, and whose end the chiefs of the prophets spoke of, which he was going to fulfil in Jerusalem — let us, going along a little further in our discourse, see him hanging on the cross in the hall at the east, thus willingly fulfilling in Golgotha his end, which was a little before spoken of in Thabor by the prophets, and dying his death on the cross for us, but appearing in glory again on the cross, even though he had neither form nor comeliness as He hung on it and died as a man.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> H. Yenipinar and S. Sahin, *Paintings of the Dark Church* (Istanbul, 1998), 40–41, 76–7; M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Paintings in Asia Minor* (Recklinghausen, 1967), vol. 1, 129–30, vol. 2, plates 229, 237.

<sup>20</sup> M. Vassilaki, ed., *Mother of God: representations of the Virgin in Byzantine art* (exhibition catalogue, Benaki Museum, Athens, 2000), 43, 453–63; I. Sinkević, *The Church of St Panteleimon at Nerezi: architecture, programme, patronage* (Wiesbaden, 2000), 48–53; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 285–7; H. Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter. Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin, 1981), 142–98; H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1981), 91–108.

<sup>21</sup> *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople*, XVII.1; ed. and tr. G. Downey, *TAPS* 47, part 6 (1957), 903–4. For a discussion of the use by Mesarites of the

This confrontation of the Transfiguration and the Crucifixion, of Christ in Glory on Thabor and on Golgotha, was a common theme in Byzantine literature and art, inspired in the first place by the words of the Gospel. The account of the Transfiguration in Luke 9.30–31 reads:

And, behold, there talked with Him [i.e. Christ] two men, which were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in Glory, and spake of his death, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

This verse was interpreted by Byzantine homilists as a reference to the coming Crucifixion. Thus Andrew of Crete wrote:

Under this cloud came Moses and Elijah, and they were seen talking together with Jesus, and foretelling his death by means of the cross.<sup>22</sup>

Some homilists developed the pairing into an elaborate sequence of *antitheses*, as we find, for example, in a homily on the Transfiguration by the south Italian preacher Philagathos. In his sermon, Philagathos asked rhetorically why the Transfiguration took place. He answers that it was in order that the disciples should remember Christ's Transfiguration when they saw him nailed naked to the cross and should realize that he had not surrendered to death unwillingly. In the words of Philagathos:

If the disciples saw [Christ's] face beaten and spat upon, they should no longer be caused to stumble when they remembered that this was the face that had shone brighter than the sun; if they saw him cloaked in purple out of mockery, they would believe that this was he who on the mountain had put on light as a mantle; if they saw him fastened to the cross between two malefactors, they would understand that this was the one who had appeared between Moses and Elijah, like a Lord flanked by his guard; if they saw him covered by the earth as a corpse, they would reflect on his being overshadowed by the cloud of light.<sup>23</sup>

The same pairing can be found in the art of Byzantine churches. Sometimes the designers simply juxtaposed the two scenes, but at other times they emphasized the opposition of ideas by means of formal analogies between the two compositions, as did Philagathos. A simple juxtaposition can be found among the late twelfth-century frescoes at Kurbinovo, where the scene of the Transfiguration was taken out of its

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relationship between the Transfiguration and the Crucifixion, see R. Webb, 'The aesthetics of sacred space: narrative, metaphor, and motion in *ekphrasis* of church buildings', *DOP* 53 (1999), 59–74, especially 71.

<sup>22</sup> In *Domini nostri Transfigurationem*; PG 97: 953C.

<sup>23</sup> *Homilia* 31, 7; ed. Rossi Taibbi, 208.

chronological sequence in order to be presented next to the Crucifixion. At Kurbinovo, as in many Byzantine churches with longitudinal plans, the episodes from the life of Christ proceed in chronological sequence around the church, from the south-east corner to the north-east corner. Thus the Visitation is found at the east end of the south wall, followed by the Adoration of the Magi, the Nativity, the Presentation, the Baptism, and the Raising of Lazarus, all of which follow in sequence on the south wall. The next scene, at the south end of the west wall, is the Entry into Jerusalem. This episode is followed by the Koimesis, which occupies its traditional place in the centre of the west wall of the church. The next scene, at the north end of the west wall, is the Transfiguration. Adjoining the Transfiguration, on the north wall, is the Crucifixion, followed by the Entombment and Lamentation, the Women at the Tomb, and the Anastasis. Thus it can be seen that the Transfiguration has been displaced chronologically, as it appears next to the Crucifixion, after the Entry into Jerusalem.<sup>24</sup>

A similar juxtaposition of the two scenes occurs at the Nea Moni on Chios (figs. 6 and 7). Here the Transfiguration is placed next to the Crucifixion, in the sequence of mosaics occupying the niches that ring the Naos beneath the dome.<sup>25</sup> In this case also, the sequence of scenes had to be juggled in order to make the juxtaposition possible; the scene of the Raising of Lazarus is presented out of its chronological order in the narthex.<sup>26</sup> At Nea Moni, to a far greater degree than at Kurbinovo, the pairing is emphasized through formal analogies between the images. As in some other Byzantine Transfiguration scenes, the rays behind the transfigured Christ are arranged in the shape of a cross, with prominent vertical and horizontal bars (fig. 15.6).<sup>27</sup> In addition, the landscapes behind the two images are harmonized. In both the Crucifixion and the Transfiguration mosaics the ground forms a flat band beneath the figures; there is no hint of a mountain top in the Transfiguration, as there usually is in Byzantine portrayals of this scene. There is even a similarity between the poses of St James and of the Centurion, on the right of the two scenes, as each raises his head and his right arm to witness Christ. Here it can be seen that the artists, in creating a resemblance between the

<sup>24</sup> L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Brussels, 1975), 130–31, text figs. 3, 4.

<sup>25</sup> Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 131.

<sup>26</sup> D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios* (Athens, 1985), vol. 1, 56–60, 126–32, 204–5; vol. 2, plates 24–41, 90–1, 154–71, 244–9.

<sup>27</sup> Compare, for example, the painting in Karanlık Kilise (Yenipinar and Sahin, *Paintings of the Dark Church*, 89; Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, vol. 2, pl. 231), or, more emphatically, the mosaic icon in the Louvre Museum (*Byzance: l'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises* [exhibition catalogue, Paris, Musée du Louvre, 1992], 368, no. 279; O. Demus, *Die byzantinischen Mosaikiken*, vol. 1, *Die grossformatigen Ikonen* [Vienna, 1991], 45–50, no. 9, pl. 10).



Transfiguration and the Crucifixion, produced a more schematic, abstract composition for the former, one that denied details of the setting in the interests of underlining the similarity.

My second pairing is the Raising of Lazarus and the Nativity. The congruencies between these two scenes are well illustrated by an early fourteenth-century mosaic icon of the twelve feasts in Florence (fig. 15.8).<sup>28</sup> The visual parallels between the two scenes on the icon are best described by the words of Andrew of Crete as he develops the *synkrisis* of the Nativity and the Raising of Lazarus in order to demonstrate the blindness of the Jews:

Just look how related and how congruent are these events. There we have Bethlehem, here we have Bethany. Then we had Maria and Salome, now we have Maria and Martha. There we have Christ wrapped up in his swaddling clothes, here we have Lazarus received in his winding cloth. There is the crib, here is the tomb. You can see the resemblance of the settings and of the people ... There the shepherds marvelled, here the priests mocked. There the Magi brought presents and fell before him, here the people who fight God were angry against him.<sup>29</sup>

This passage is taken from Andrew of Crete's sermon on the Entry into Jerusalem, which was a popular reading for Palm Sunday in the Byzantine church — it was reproduced in numerous liturgical collections dating from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries.<sup>30</sup> Like the preacher, the artist of the mosaic icon depicted the two midwives and the two sisters, the swaddling clothes and the winding cloth, the crib and the tomb, the Magi, the shepherds, and the witnesses of the miracle. As at the Nea Moni, formal similarities underline the force of the comparison: the crib is shaped like a sarcophagus; one of the shepherds and the man unwrapping the corpse are both seen from the back, with the head turned to be seen in profile. In order to demonstrate that this harmonization of the two scenes on the icon is no accident, it is only necessary to contrast the early fourteenth-century Byzantine icon with a contemporary Italian version of the same scenes from the cycle painted by Giotto in the Arena chapel at Padua (figs. 9 and 10).<sup>31</sup> In Giotto's paintings there are no midwives in the Nativity scene, nor do the three Magi appear here, for

<sup>28</sup> V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura Bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 368, fig. 489. A similar pairing of caves, windings, crib and sarcophagus can be seen on the left-hand panel of an eleventh-century diptych of the twelve feasts at Mount Sinai; G. and M. Sotiriou, *Icones du Mont Sinai* (Athens, 1956), vol. 1, plates 39, 41; vol. 2, 52.

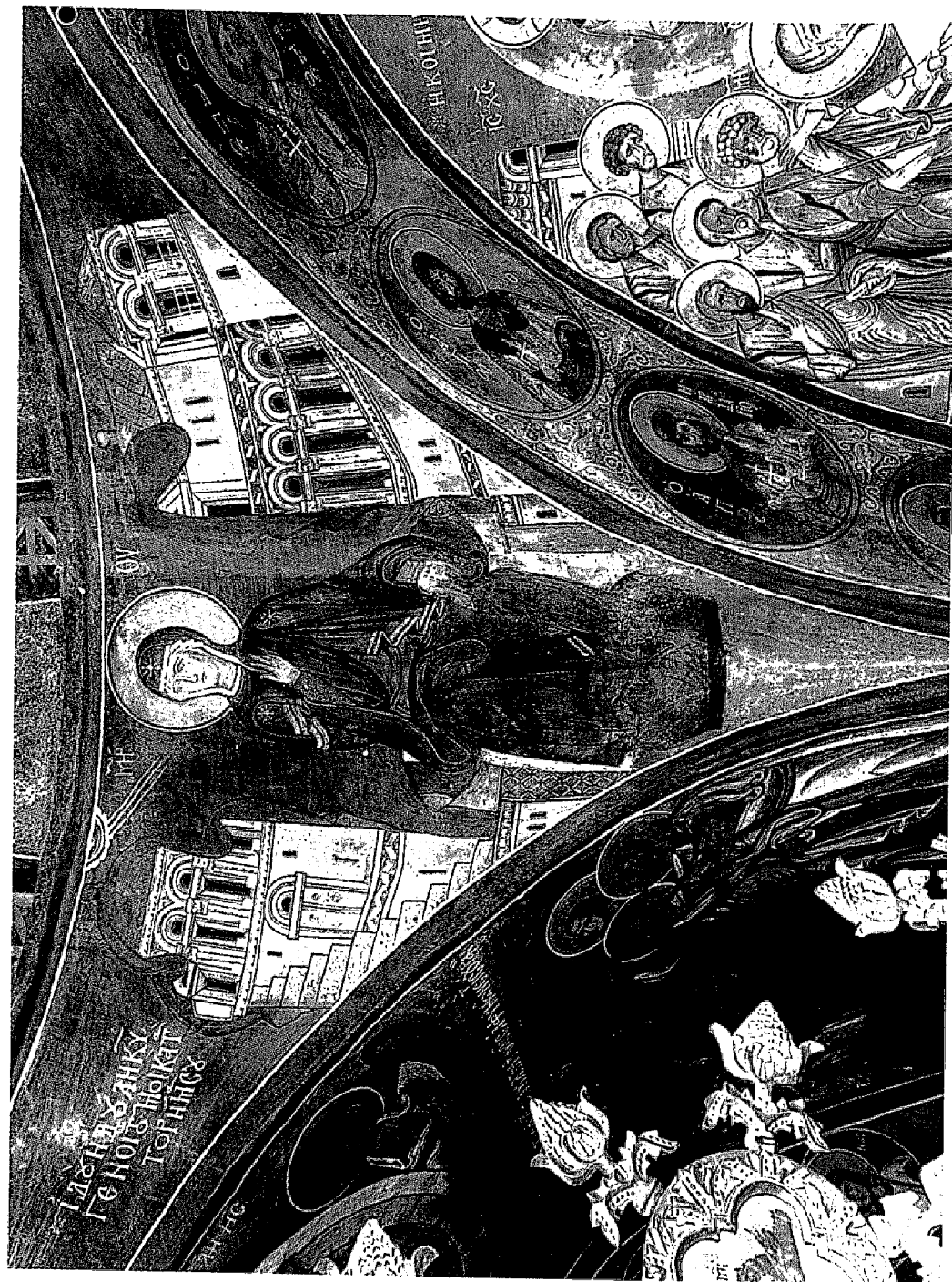
<sup>29</sup> *In Ramos Palmarum*; PG 97: 989.

<sup>30</sup> A. Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche*, pt. I, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1937), 176, 188, 262, 272; vol. 2 (1938), 15, 77, 99, 128, 278; vol. 3 (1943), 266.

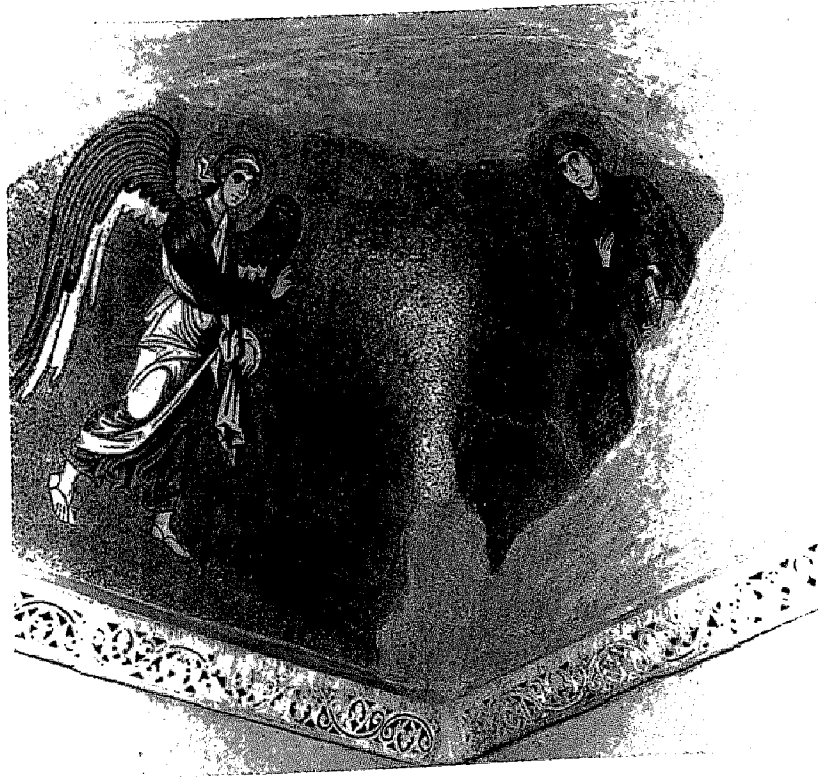
<sup>31</sup> G. Basile, *Giotto. The Arena Chapel Frescoes* (London, 1993), 122, 126.

they are shown in a separate panel. One of the shepherds in the Nativity scene is still seen from the back, but there is no comparable figure in the Raising of Lazarus. Most notably, in Giotto's version, the crib is painted in a far more realistic manner as a piece of wooden furniture from daily life, as a chest on legs rather than as a sarcophagus resting on the ground. Liberated from the compulsion to compare, Giotto was free to describe — to paint the furnishings of daily life.

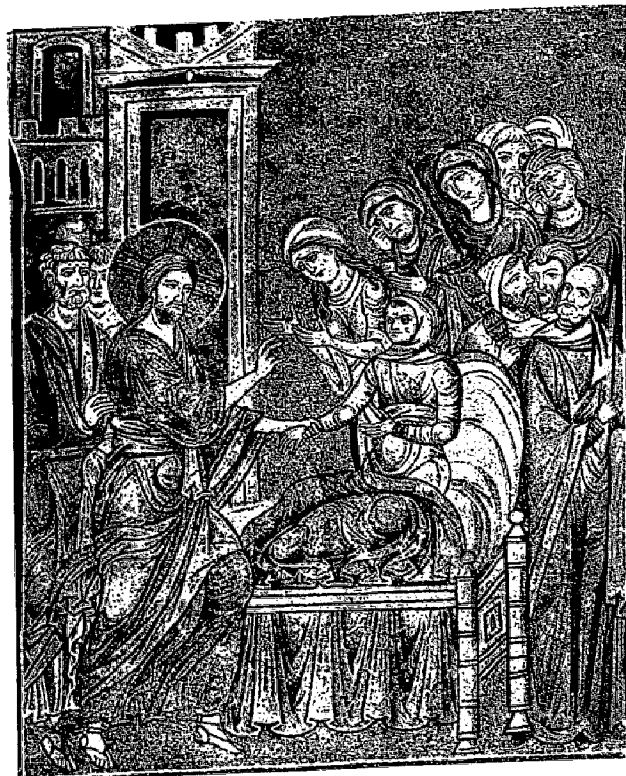
In conclusion, the Byzantine theology of images blocked off certain avenues of artistic expression, such as liturgical drama as it was developed in the Latin West. Rhetoric became for the Byzantines another kind of visual drama, one that maintained the fixed forms and good order of icons. In some instances rhetorical texts provided Byzantine art with metaphorical imagery, as in the case of the symbols of the Virgin in portrayals of the Annunciation. However, the range and frequency of epithets was much greater in literature than in art. In other cases, the practice of *ekphrasis* provided Byzantine artists with dramatic detail, with which to enhance their portrayals of New Testament events. But here, also, the repertoire of the spoken word was greater than that of paintings or of mosaics. The most fundamental bond between Byzantine art and rhetoric was in the practice of *synkrisis* and *antithesis*. Through these two techniques, Byzantine artists maintained the continuity of their traditional narratives and portrait types, while at the same time they captured transitory events and emotions and made them timeless by locking them into a static balance of different time periods, past, present, and future. Byzantine drama was created not so much through actors, but rather through sanctioned icons, and through their orderly dialogue with each other, either seen or implied. Nevertheless, even as rhetoric opened up some avenues of visual expression, it closed off others. The habit of comparing pairs of images encouraged the suppression of ancillary detail in favour of congruent compositions that could easily be related to each other by viewers. Thus, it could be said, metaphor and *ekphrasis* encouraged more detailed and realistic depictions, while *synkrisis* and *antithesis* often worked in the opposite direction, smoothing out differences and distinctions between scenes. At least in the cycle of major feasts, *synkrisis* and *antithesis* had the stronger role. Here, in the imagining of Christ's life and death, the discordant notes of excessive realism were frequently avoided, in favour of the spare harmonies of rhetoric.



15.1 Lagoudera, Panagia tou Arakou, fresco. Virgin of the Annunciation



15.2 Daphni, monastery church, mosaic. Annunciation

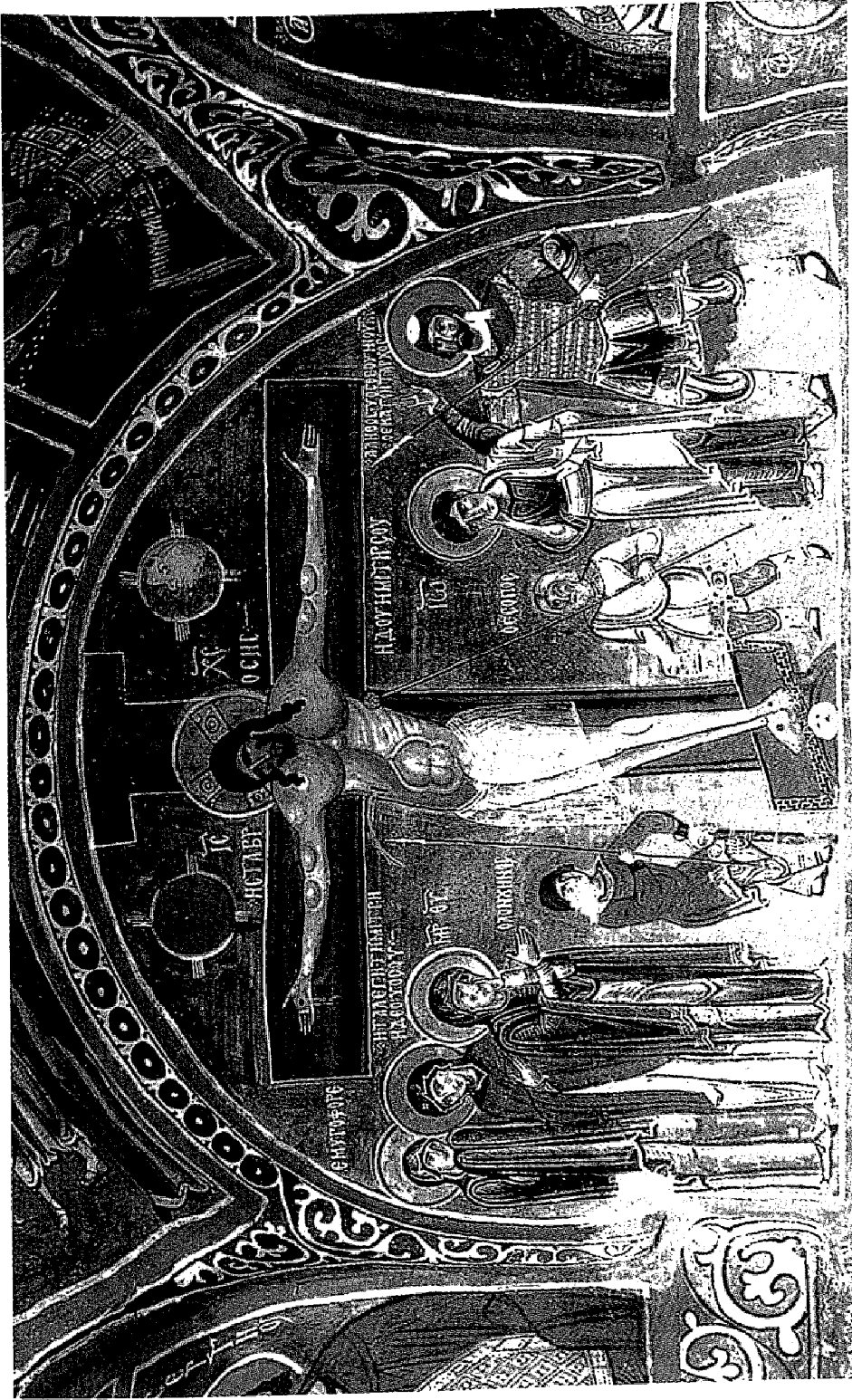


15.3 Monreale, Cathedral, mosaic. Raising of the son of the Widow of Nain



15.4 Karanlık Kilise, fresco. Nativity





15.5 Karanlık Kilise, fresco. Crucifixion

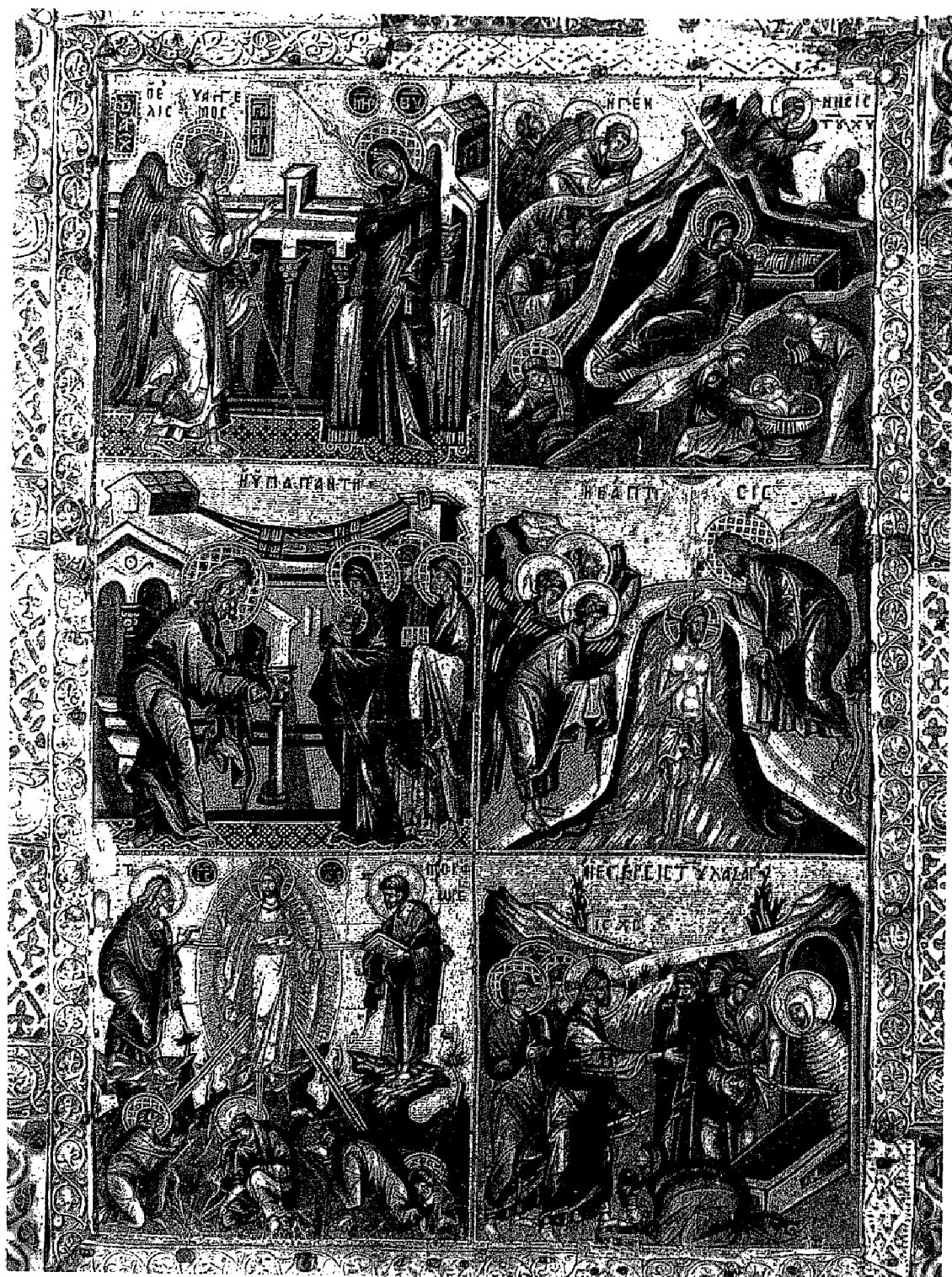


15.6 Chios, Nea Moni, mosaic. Transfiguration

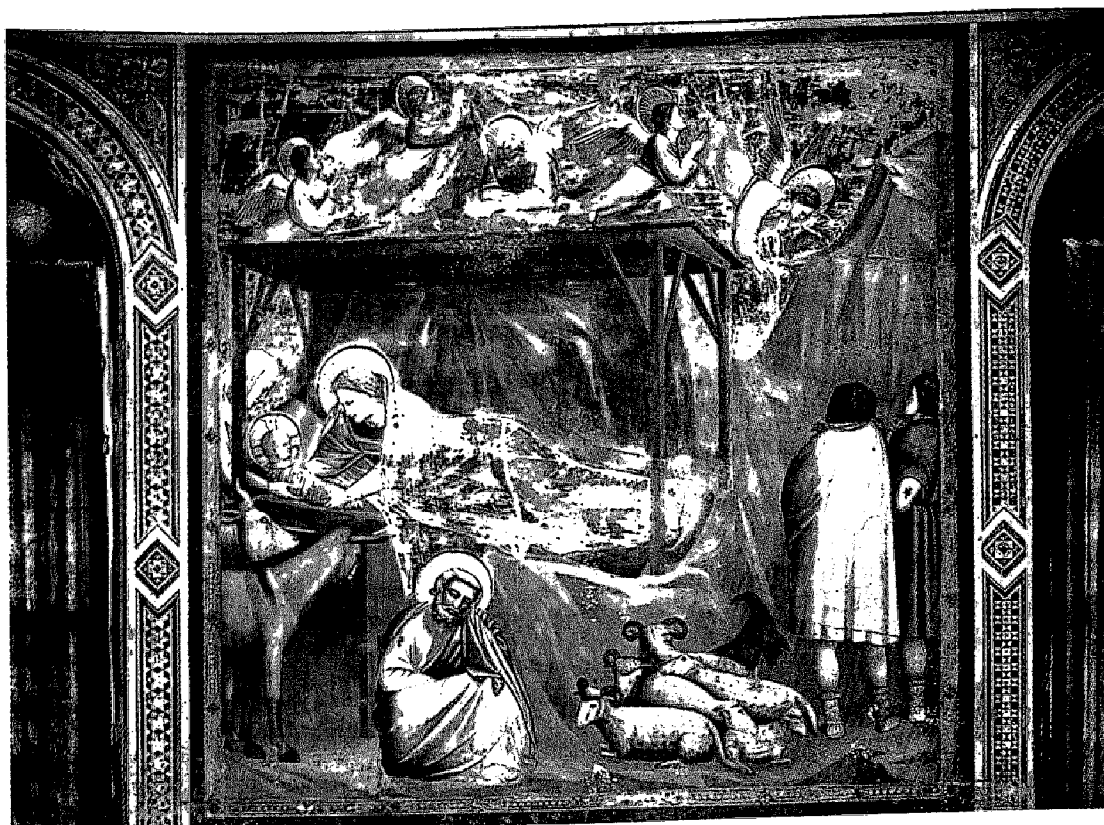


15.7 Chios, Nea Moni, mosaic. Crucifixion





15.8 Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, mosaic icon.  
Scenes from the life of Christ



15.9 Padua, Arena Chapel, fresco by Giotto. Nativity



15.10 Padua, Arena Chapel, fresco by Giotto. Raising of Lazarus



## 16. 'Living painting'

Robin Cormack

This paper is about painting in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries and about ways in which changes in its forms and viewing have been detected, described and interpreted in recent art history. I will need to ask if this is a 'genuine' period of change, and if so, whether contemporary Byzantine viewers were aware of the nature of change and whether we too have the terms in which to describe it. The question of rhetoric will arise in this paper both in terms of the connections between art and Byzantine intellectual thinking and its rhetorical contexts; and in terms of whether explanations of any changes in art in this period should lie in other factors, such as changes in spirituality and the ways in which art served spirituality and faith and their visual expressions. My problem in setting out these issues is how far one can unravel any part of the interwoven texture of Byzantine visual literacy in its own time from our own perspectives. The question that was set to be addressed in this section of the symposium was whether actual connections between rhetorical training and artistic productivity can be demonstrated.

A powerful case today (in April 2001) of the use of contemporary rhetoric to characterize a current historical event is the vocabulary used to describe the iconoclasm of the Taliban at Bamiyan in Afghanistan and the destruction of two enormous Buddha statues, repeatedly termed by media commentators as 'extremism' and 'fundamentalism'. This is, of course, political rhetoric describing cultural genocide (the elimination of a Buddhist past), but the words show how much our present may colour our interpretations of an activity which was central to Christian and Byzantine culture: how far do we see Byzantine iconoclasm as a fundamentalist and extreme movement? Or could this equally well be a description of the iconophile party? In an example of the expectations of modern cultural literacy, the cover of the *Economist* (for 11–17 July 1998) emulated a Russian icon and framed the then President Boris Yeltsin as a saint between flying angels (fig. 16.1). The modern viewer (or since it is a cover, prospective reader, of the *Economist*), was expected to identify from a reading of the visual signs the character of Russian society and its problems, and that its salvation was in the hands of the angels, holding 'holy' dollars. The viewer is assisted by the text: 'The price of an icon'. Yet the visual rhetoric of the

From *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys. Copyright 2003 by the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Published by Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 3HR, Great Britain.

imagery contains all sorts of subversive ambiguities (is the dollar really the salvation of Russia?). Any study of Byzantine visual rhetoric as seen through our eyes must be equally sensitive to its ambiguities and our distortions. The hazards of reading and viewing the rhetorics of historical narrative are treated in Greg Denning's *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, which documents many ways in which everyone's personal cultural literacy depends on their own views of the present ('presentism'), their own views of the past ('relativism'), and how these influence the reading of historical narratives (or fictions).<sup>1</sup> Denning's book describes the activities of a paper like the one you are reading as the attempt to 're-text the already texted past'.<sup>2</sup> We shall see how other art historians have recently done that, and attempt to examine the reconciliation of the rhetoric of texts and the rhetoric of images.<sup>3</sup>

### *The Question*

The title of this paper comes from a major section of Hans Belting's *Likeness and Presence*, where chapter 13 is entitled: "'Living Painting": poetry and rhetoric in a new style of icons in the eleventh and twelfth centuries'.<sup>4</sup> This influential book has ensured that the concept of 'living painting' has entered the discussion of Middle Byzantine painting, and certain icons instantly come to mind as images which might offer examples of an innovating Byzantine art in the twelfth century — the emotional representation of the Virgin and Child in the Vladimir icon (painted in Constantinople around 1120 and now displayed as a working icon in a church in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow), or the narrative portrayal of the Annunciation icon of around 1190 now in the Monastery of St Catherine at Sinai (figs. 16.2 and 16.3).

Hans Belting develops his theme in this chapter as he does in other chapters by choosing two secondary approaches coming from different angles and looking for a synthesis. He also uses a number of primary sources which come from the aristocratic circles of Constantinople. Belting chose, for one approach, Henry Maguire's *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium*,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: passion, power and theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge, 1992), at 366–7.

<sup>2</sup> See Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, 5. These issues are highlighted in a wide-ranging study by A. Cutler, 'The pathos of distance: Byzantium in the gaze of Renaissance Europe and modern scholarship' in C. Farago, ed., *Reframing the Renaissance: visual culture in Europe and Latin America 1450–1650* (New Haven and London, 1995), 23–45.

<sup>3</sup> The most recent discussion of this question with bibliography is R.S. Nelson, 'To say and to see: ekphrasis and vision in Byzantium', in R.S. Nelson, ed., *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 2000), 143–68.

<sup>4</sup> H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: a history of the image before the era of art* (Chicago, 1994; 1st German edition, 1990), 261–96.

<sup>5</sup> Princeton, 1981.

which argues the thesis that the origin of the ideas and motifs of a new icon like the Annunciation should be related to old rhetorical traditions of Byzantine education and writing. Belting accepts this and sees the question to be why this rhetorical tradition should influence art at this particular moment in the twelfth century. He hopes to find the answer in the book by Alexander Kazhdan and Annabel Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*.<sup>6</sup> Here they set out the parameters which, they suggest, caused cultural change in this period — namely the growth of individualism and its encouragement of heretics, the growth of lay theologians and the growth of popular religious practices, against all of which the establishment had to protect itself, thus turning to the use of the visual arts as one of its strategies of communication and influence. Belting admits it is not easy to combine their approaches, but that is what he sets out to do.

In reviewing these interpretations now, the questions have become no easier, especially as there is now a later 'developed' Maguire approach to set against his earlier thesis. The 1981 thesis was about rhetoric as a continuous element of Byzantine culture, and he used it as the factor which intersected with both texts and images. Rhetoric became the medium which ensured the survival of classical forms from Late Antiquity through the Byzantine period; the argument gave a new layer of support to Kitzinger's thesis of the role of 'perennial Hellenism' in Byzantine art, as the survival of the rhetorical structures of Antiquity ensured the survival of 'similar formal characteristics in Byzantine art'. This 1981 book might now be described as 'early' Maguire to distinguish it from 'developed' Maguire: a study in conjunction with Kazhdan and a later book (in 1991 and 1996) introduced a different sort of literary evidence, arguing from these texts that Byzantine viewers, responding to a highly restricted range of forms and motives, were particularly subtle in their responses to small variations.<sup>7</sup> This theory posits overall continuity subverted by endlessly subtle variations. Kazhdan and Epstein, however, had been concerned with the integral rhetoric of historical narratives (in a different sense) and with the empirical, both within their own period and from our viewpoint. Hence Belting's problems in constructing the synthesis he wishes to make (and the increasing complexity of any such attempt).

Belting's contribution was to accept the fact of historical change, and to exploit some primary texts of Michael Psellos, a Byzantine intellectual trained in rhetoric who was describing works of art in terms which Belting identified as telling evidence to justify the emergence of a new style in art.

<sup>6</sup> Berkeley, 1985.

<sup>7</sup> See A. Kazhdan and H. Maguire, 'Byzantine hagiographical texts as sources on art', *DOP* 45 (1991), 1–22; and H. Maguire, *The Icons of their Bodies: saints and their images in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1996). These publications are assessed by Nelson, 'To say and to see', 144.

However, it needs immediately to be said that this evidence is about viewing and not about production. Psellos is an important witness to the Byzantine intellectual description of the activity of viewing, and as such his strategy of verbalization needs to be compared with the writings of Photios, who has given us several pieces of writing on art, including his sermon to inaugurate the apse mosaic of the Virgin and Child in Hagia Sophia in 867. Nelson has argued that the use of terms like 'life-like' in this text reflects the positive nature of Byzantine viewing of art as a vehicle of 'the eyes of faith'.<sup>8</sup> Thus, to return to Psellos, his description of works of art is likely to act as a demonstration of his religiosity as much as his observation. Belting treats at length Psellos' description of an icon of the Crucifixion.<sup>9</sup> The *ekphrasis* is highly rhetorical, using the dual strategies of antithesis and hyperbole, which Maguire has emphasized was the characteristic mark of traditional rhetorical education, while describing a representation of the dead (*apsychos*) Christ but living (*empsychos*) God. For Belting this text provided a description of genuine stylistic change in Byzantine art, communicated through the traditional structures of rhetoric. He suggested one particular Sinai icon as a case in point of this new style. But the fact is that, as in the case of Photios, we cannot be sure how far Psellos' text responds to pictorial rather than intellectual ideas. Belting is more optimistic and concludes that this is a period of significant change, in which both viewers and producers participated, and he sets out what the new features of Komnenian art are: 1. new narrative interests; 2. new visual techniques of communication of emotion; 3. new subjects.

Belting builds on texts of Psellos and others, also highly rhetorical in their style of *ekphrasis*, to document the Byzantine reception of changes in art in this period. He argues that we see the invention of a new style of painting, consciously recognized by intellectuals as 'living painting'. He also refers to the inventories of monastic typika as describing works 'in the new style'. He elides poetics and art, and speaks of art as painted hymn.

Our problem is therefore how far the changes in art in this period, which we can ourselves set out and describe, can be understood — or even explained — through the Byzantine rhetoric of *ekphrasis*, and the possible exposure of artists to this rhetoric. This section of the paper will identify some of the difficulties which have to be faced here, starting with the basic issue of how some of the words used in the texts can be understood (and translated). The fundamental case discussed in this paper is whether there was a Byzantine conception of 'living painting' as understood in Belting's discussion. This means examining the words used for this concept, *empsychos graphe*. The first point to notice is that *empsychos* is not a new

<sup>8</sup> Nelson, 'To say and to see', especially his conclusion on 161.

<sup>9</sup> Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 269–71 and 528–9. See also P. Gautier, 'Un discours inédit de M. Psellos sur la crucifixion', *REB* 49 (1991), 5–66.



concept of the Middle Byzantine period. For example, Eusebios in the fourth century (*contra Marcellum* 1.4) speaks of an *empsychos eikon*; the meaning here is that a son is the 'living icon' of his father, whom he closely resembled.<sup>10</sup> The recent book by Georgia Frank on Late Antique viewing is concerned to document how images and relics were seen as 'living' saints. One example that is discussed is the bishop Victricius of Rouen, a friend of Paulinus, who emphasizes the power of vision in the act of veneration.<sup>11</sup> He explains that in gazing at a relic, one sees the blood and ashes with the eyes of the body; only then do the eyes of the heart open, allowing the viewer to recognize the presence of the saint in a small fragment. Pilgrims learned to see the living saints with the eye of faith. Another passage where emphasis is put on the living appearance of the saintly is, of course, Photios' description of the apse Virgin of Hagia Sophia at Constantinople, in which it is said that Virgin almost appears to speak, so life-like is she. In his recent analysis of the homily Robert Nelson takes care to emphasize that this text is part *ekphrasis* and part spoken in the performative context of a church service in which the Virgin was the centre of adoration.<sup>12</sup> I will come back later to the appreciation of a text in which the audience sees an image, hears a response to it, and sees the speaker making and influencing the audience in its response. What is clear at this point is that the words employed in the writing of *ekphrasis* have a long and complicated pedigree in Byzantine writing, and are as much part of theological exegesis as of pictorial description.<sup>13</sup>

Another type of text, the monastic charter, is central to Belting's discussion and in particular the 1152 *Typikon* of the church of the Kosmosoteira at Pherrai in North Greece, an imperial foundation by Isaac Komnenos; this has now appeared in a new translation by Nancy Patterson Ševčenko.<sup>14</sup> This *Typikon* includes a complex and sophisticated set of descriptions of its icons, including the two main despotic (titular) icons of Christ (*Hyperagathos*) and the Virgin (*Kosmosoteira*), which were presumably on each side of the sanctuary.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For this and other Patristic usages, see Lampe, 459–60, s.v. ἔμψυχος.

<sup>11</sup> G. Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: pilgrims to living saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2000), 178.

<sup>12</sup> Nelson, 'To say and to see', 150.

<sup>13</sup> See L. James and R. Webb, 'To understand ultimate things and enter secret places: ekphrasis and art in Byzantium', *Art History*, 14 (1991), 1–17.

<sup>14</sup> 'Kosmosoteira', in J. Thomas and A.C. Hero, eds., *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C., 2000), 782–858.

<sup>15</sup> For icons of this period, but in this case set out perhaps in special stands, see the Christ (*Philanthropos*) and Virgin (*Eleousa*) icons of the Enkleistra of Neophytos near Paphos; A.W. Epstein, 'The middle Byzantine sanctuary barrier: templon or iconostasis?', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 134 (1981), 1–28, especially fig. 8.



They are represented with great skill so that the images (*eikonismata*) appear alive (*empnoa* = breathing) to the beholder, and as though letting out a beautiful sound from their mouths toward him. For it is a marvel to behold these likenesses in painting, that is to say, alive and yet unmoving in space, and hence to praise the artist whom the First Creator and Lord endowed with the knowledge how to paint in a novel fashion. For who would not congratulate him, after having traced the form of these likenesses onto his eye and heart as though it were living?<sup>16</sup>

This text is to an extent a pastiche of several of the earlier phrases we have noted, and it repeats with some hyperbole the same ideas that are found in texts from Late Antiquity onwards. At face value it fits into the pattern identified by Maguire in which the Byzantine vocabulary of viewing is somehow 'perennial', and intellectuals when struggling to describe art can be seen as recycling the same words (and the same ideas, if not clichés). How sensitive Byzantine writers and Byzantine viewers of these icons were to nuances of representation is a question which is difficult to judge. In other words, do these words refer to different artistic styles and forms when they are used in the Early Byzantine period from those of the Middle Byzantine period? The question put this way does have an answer for us: we see in our viewing of Byzantine art considerable differences between, say, the sixth century and the twelfth century. When we compare the apse mosaics at Sinai with the Annunciation icon, we are likely to say that the earlier is more 'abstract' and less 'naturalistic' than the latter; at the same time it is worth pointing out that our vocabulary is inadequate too, for we are also likely to say that the Sinai icon of Christ which is generally dated to the sixth century is more 'naturalistic' in style than the 'mannered' icon of the Annunciation (fig. 16.3). We use the same word 'naturalistic' to refer to a whole spectrum of mimetic art forms. Perhaps we need to be more tolerant of Byzantine inadequacies in describing art. However, what is clear in the texts adduced by Belting is that we have a Byzantine intellectual statement of icon veneration and artistic expertise from the highest circles of society. If there is a change in the viewing of art to be detected in the Middle Byzantine period, it is documented by such texts which emanate from among the patrons for whom the art was produced.

### *The Problem*

The problem is therefore how far 'living painting' is a new production of the Middle Byzantine period, and how far this particular rhetoric of viewing found in the texts can be linked with artistic innovation. Byzantine art may change over time, but our question is how that is matched by

<sup>16</sup> See Ševčenko, '*Kosmosoteira*', 802; and Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 517–9.

changes in rhetoric and its expressions. New interests in narrative portrayal and new subjects are not special to the Middle Byzantine period; change and development in its production can be tracked in our terms in every century in Byzantine art. Kartsonis has tracked the invention of the subject of the Anastasis before iconoclasm; the Paris Psalter is all about innovation, even if through the development of traditional forms, and the Paleologan period is one of massive invention of new subjects (such as the pictorialization of the Akathistos Hymn, and so forth).<sup>17</sup> The Middle Byzantine period fits into a continually developing and adapting culture. So changes in the character of art that are found in the Annunciation icon (fig. 16.3) may be in response to all sorts of factors, and several of these are suggested in the literature. Some have seen the style as the autonomous progression of stylistic forms, others have looked for sources in texts ranging from Patristic homilies to contemporary hymns and other devotional texts about Mary within the context of the late twelfth-century experience.<sup>18</sup>

The current question is whether we can extract from Byzantine writing a 'documented' contemporary perception of change, and the identification of this as 'living painting'. And the difficulty that has emerged is that the words are not new, and that the rhetoric of Psellos also has a history. Perhaps more basic is whether 'living painting' is a fair translation of its Greek original. Another translation, which is equally conceptually provocative, would be: 'animated scripture'. This identifies the issue faced by the art as how to animate the scriptures (a different concept again from Ouspensky's much quoted 'theology in colour'); it is about the effectiveness of art to make scripture and the divine visible and believable, and would be equally applicable to the cases discussed in Late Antiquity by Georgia Frank. Another problem of translation in these texts is the word *kainourgion*, translated by Belting as 'in the new style' rather than the alternative 'newly made' (is the word a value judgment or an identifier?).<sup>19</sup> In this case the word is used in the *Typikon* of the Kecharitomene convent in Constantinople (between 1110-16), and is translated by Robert Jordan as 'new'.<sup>20</sup>

The dilemma that we have is that the art historian is willing to denote the twelfth century as a distinctive period of stylistic change: but to apply this characterization to it with words apparently found in Middle Byzantine texts may be to give a false harmony between modern critical

<sup>17</sup> A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: the making of an image* (Princeton, 1986); R. Cormack, *Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> For a summary of approaches, with references, see A. Weyl Carr in H.C. Evans and W.D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium* (exhibition catalogue; New York, 1997), 374-5.

<sup>19</sup> See Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 261 and 521 for the Kecharitomene convent in Constantinople (before 1118).

<sup>20</sup> In Thomas and Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, vol. 2, 715.

words and Byzantine rhetoric. Can we therefore at this point shift the argument? The question that has been under consideration is how far is rhetoric a factor. What perhaps we should now ask is how far are there other circumstances which shape the various forms of Byzantine art in the twelfth century. This question accepts the idea of change in this century; it accepts that Macedonian art does differ from Komnenian art (to bring in two different but equally difficult words). It accepts that the mosaics of Daphni, for example, are emotive works of art in the sense that they lay more emphasis on the narrative of the moment while the earlier mosaics of Hosios Loukas can be said to communicate the eternal values of the symbolic elements of the narrative (we can compare in both churches scenes like the Nativity or the Anastasis to make this point). In other words, the pictorial functions of the mosaics may be different: Hosios Loukas more concerned with theology, Daphni more with visualizing the events as they happened. In the case of the Kosmoteira *Typikon*, it may be possible to accept the rhetorical texts adduced by Belting as an indication of the function of the titular icons as devotional art, maintained by the devotional practices of the period. Twelfth-century art then emerges as a complex medium with several different ways of satisfying twelfth-century spirituality.

Nelson and others have likewise identified the issue as the understanding of how icons worked for the viewers whose cognitive perceptions were determined by 'the eye of faith'. In his studies on the Christ as the Man of Sorrows Belting has pointed to Passion celebrations, ritual and the supporting artifacts as an important locus for change, probably within the highly sponsored art of the monastery.<sup>21</sup> Ann Derbes has also analysed individual scenes in the Passion cycle in order to unravel the differing sources from Byzantium and elsewhere that stimulated change in Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, lined up at the same time with the ideas of the new Franciscan and Dominican spiritual movements.<sup>22</sup> This research points to changing functions of art, changing types of production and changing patterns connected with re-definitions of the faith in the discussions of the twelfth century. While the Byzantine texts were constructed within traditions of rhetoric, yet they were embedded in theology and spirituality as much as in literary patterns of argument. Similarly our understanding of particular cases depends on the exploration of the whole cultural context of their production. For example, we might consider the Kastoria double-sided Virgin and Child and Man of Sorrows, recently exhibited in the 'Mother of God' exhibition at the Benaki Museum

<sup>21</sup> H. Belting, *Bild und Publikum im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1981), and *idem*, 'An image and its function in the liturgy: the Man of Sorrows in Byzantium', *DOP* 34-5 (1981), 1-16.

<sup>22</sup> A. Derbes, *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: narrative painting, Franciscan ideologies and the Levant* (Cambridge, 1996).

and the Anastasis from the Great Lavra on Athos, and now in the collection of the Hermitage in St Petersburg (and exhibited in the exhibition 'Sinai, Byzantium, Russia' at the Courtauld Institute in London) (figs. 16.4 and 5).<sup>23</sup> How do these icons respond to the twelfth-century Byzantine 'eye of faith'? They both have innovatory aspects: the Man of Sorrows iconography is a new idea of this period, and the Anastasis is both symmetrical in composition and has a key element of iconography highlighted by this symmetry, the conspicuous visibility of the wounds of Christ.

One way to approach this question is to see 'faith' as something defined and refined by dissent and criticism. The Middle Byzantine period was not one of Ecumenical councils, but it was one of heresy trials and specific-issue councils. This atmosphere of the criticism and definition of Orthodoxy had a multiplier effect: it polarized and intensified Orthodoxy (again one might think of the period of the Taliban in Afghanistan and how extremism and fundamentalism can intensify the faith).

Middle Byzantine art production covers the period from the end of Iconoclasm in 843 when the triumph of Orthodoxy established icons as a key marker of the true Orthodox Church at Byzantium, and the Incarnation of Christ was seen as the effective legitimation of figural icons. As religious objects — holy icons — they became a particular focus of prayer, veneration and the symbolic expression of Christian belief. As monks became an increasingly significant component of Byzantine society, both in the cities and in the wilderness, the monasteries and their patrons, particularly from the eleventh century onwards, seemed to have played a pivotal role in the development of the medium of the painted panel. The icon as object both created and supported the spiritual environment of the monastic church; prayer and services took place in front of the icons. The sacred topography of the church changed in the course of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries through the increasing attention given to the sanctuary as the Holy of Holies. Instead of the low screen around the chancel as in the early Christian church, a screen (the *templon*) was inserted between the altar and the nave, with columns supporting an *epistyle* to which could be attached curtains or icons. The liturgy became more theatrical as the celebrant priest could open and close the sanctuary doors and curtains and could conceal as well as display the bread and wine of the eucharist.

Side by side with this physical development of the church sanctuary, the question arises how far we can detect from the evidence of monastic

<sup>23</sup> M. Vassilaki, *Mother of God: representations of the Virgin in Byzantine art* (exhibition catalogue; Benaki Museum, Athens, 2000), 484–5 and Y. Piatnitski et al., eds., *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia: orthodox art from the sixth to the twentieth century* (exhibition catalogue; St Petersburg and London, 2000).

spiritual reading and theological discussions in Church councils a corresponding intensification of interest in the physical aspects of Christ's incarnation and in the close imitation of his life on earth as a preparation for the heavenly paradise. Popular literature in the Byzantine monastery included the *Heavenly Ladder* written at Sinai by John Klimakos in the seventh century and available from the eleventh century in manuscript editions with cycles of pictures of monks climbing (or falling off) the spiritual ladder to heaven. Mystical writings such as those of Symeon the Theologian (949–1022), who encouraged the individualistic path to salvation, were equally influential. In the twelfth century there were debates about the eucharist and the nature of the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ.<sup>24</sup> The traditional Byzantine view was that Christ was present 'in our midst' as offering and offerer, and in the local council in 1157 at Constantinople the view that the liturgy was merely a memorial or symbolic representation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross was condemned, but the view then developing in the West of the transubstantiation of the bread and wine was not part of twelfth-century Orthodoxy (though it became so from the fifteenth century).<sup>25</sup> The thinking was that the icons were symbolic and Christ seen and venerated through them, but in the mystery of the eucharist the consecrated gifts could not be seen as body and blood of Christ through physical eyes. This emphasis on the corporeality of Christ seen through icons may have been a factor influencing their style, and stimulating their increasing realism and new subjects (such as the Man of Sorrows and the demonstration of Christ's wounds in the Anastasis). Although art historians have spoken of a twelfth-century 'renaissance' with reference to the increasing emotionalism (or 'humanism') of twelfth-century icons, one of the key elements of change could be this use and viewing of art as the expression of personal involvement with the 'living' Christ. This development of ways of portraying the body in the service of the gaze of the pilgrim who wishes to see the saint at the very site of his personal experiences of God is seen in two other icons shown in the St Petersburg and Courtauld exhibitions: the large thirteenth-century icons by Stephanos of Moses and Elijah (figs. 16.6 and 7). These may have decorated the chapels on the mountain where the events they symbolize were believed to have happened; pilgrims were enabled to re-enact in their minds' eye events which happened here in the presence of the living saint.

The term 'living painting' or 'animated scripture' emerges as a way of describing how belief is represented and communicated by art. The

<sup>24</sup> See J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: historical trends and doctrinal themes* (London, 1974), especially 201–11.

<sup>25</sup> J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600–1700)* (Chicago and London, 1974), especially 280ff.

pictorial interest in twelfth-century icons in the representation of the body expresses contemporary thinking about seeing Christ, and reflects current spirituality and faith and the rhetoric in which these are negotiated. Faith was expressed in hymns, sermons and art as well as in the dry theology of council decisions (and displayed as monumental text inscribed in stone as in the narthex of Hagia Sophia at this period).<sup>26</sup> Rhetoric is therefore embedded in both the production and the reception of all these, just as much as it is in a lecture which uses words and pictures and involves performance. This has been theorized recently by Simon Goldhill with reference to Antique and Late Antique texts of viewing and performance.<sup>27</sup> A case in point in this study is the rhetorical devices by which Prudentius communicates his weepy prostration before an image of the martyr Cassian, representing himself in a representative Christian posture and implicating the reader in a complex response to the poet's own response to the image. In the cases of Photios or Psellos, the self-consciously rhetorical writer aims to control the viewing process by an authoritative set of statements about how the faithful should respond to art. Here lies the power of rhetoric. What is not clear is whether the artists in the production of these icons 'designed' these viewing circumstances (except that artists are viewers too). Prostration in front of an icon, or the representation of human prostration within the icon in front of heavenly figures, is itself a highly complex form of Christian experience.

### Conclusion

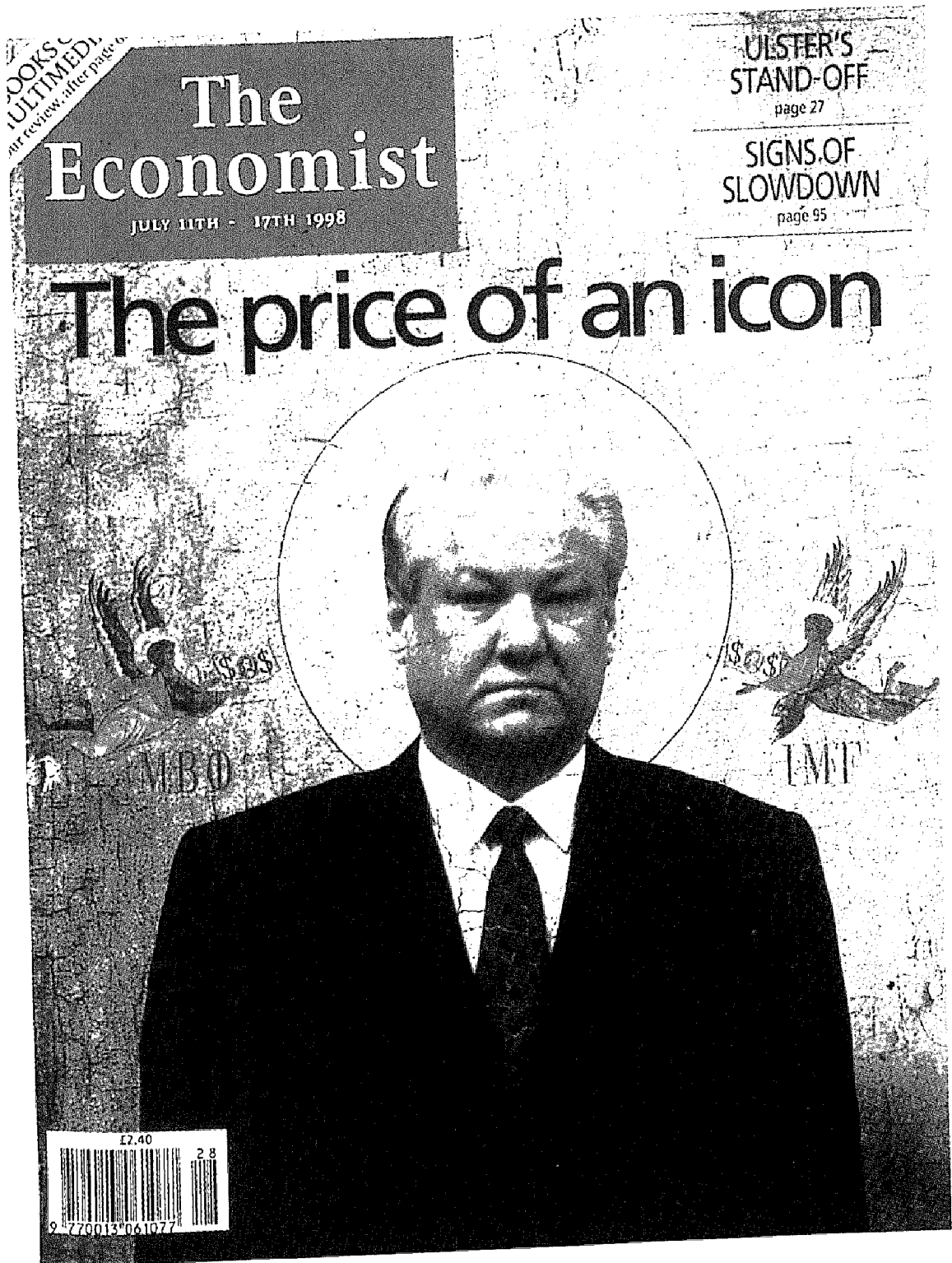
To return finally to the question underlying this paper, whether real connections between rhetorical training and artistic production can be demonstrated. I have discussed this with relation to the forms of art of the twelfth century in particular, and have tried to give terms within which an answer can be pursued.

I have looked at images and texts which might be said to employ the traditional devices of rhetoric, such as the use of antithesis and the setting up of polarities. The most obvious case in art is perhaps the Kastoria two-sided Man of Sorrows icon where the Virgin and Child represents both the joy of the incarnation of the divinity and the sadness of the crucifixion. The icon therefore presents a rhetorical trope, a visual symbol, an article of faith, a theological argument, and a way of viewing. This suggests that rhetoric is implicated in the structures of pictorial composition, but is not the single or even predominant motivating factor in the process of

<sup>26</sup> C. Mango, 'The conciliar Edict of 1166', *DOP* 17 (1963), 315–30.

<sup>27</sup> S. Goldhill, 'Body/Politics: is there a history of reading?', in T.M. Falkner, N. Felson and D. Konstan, eds., *Contextualizing Classics: ideology, performance, dialogue. Essays in Honor of John J. Peradotto* (Lanham, MD, 1999), 89–120.

production (and the nature of viewing may also be complicated by the self-consciousness of the viewer's own experience of education and rhetoric). The twelfth century is certainly another period of significant changes in Byzantine art; and rhetorical training was part of education in the period. But there is no simple linkage between the two.



16.1 The Price of an Icon, Cover page, *Economist*, 11-17 July 1998





16.2 Icon with Virgin and Child (The Vladimir icon), sent to Kiev from Constantinople around 1120, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, inv. 14243. 104 x 69 cm



16.3 Icon with Annunciation, painted at Sinai or Constantinople in the late 12th century, Collection of the Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai. 61 x 42.2 cm



- 16.4 Two-sided icon with the Virgin Hodigitria with Child (front) and the Man of Sorrows (secondary side), painted in the late 12th century, Kastoria, Byzantine Museum, inv. 457/90. 115 x 77 cm



- 16.5 Icon with the Anastasis from a templon epistyle of the Great Lavra of St Athanasios, Mount Athos, second half of the 12th century, State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, inv. 1-8. 31.5 x 18 cm



- 16.6 Icon with Moses receiving the Law on Mount Sinai, painted at Sinai and signed by the painter and donor Stephanos, around 1200, Collection of the Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai. 130 x 67 cm





- 16.7 Icon with Elijah fed by a raven, painted at Sinai and signed by the painter and donor Stephanos, around 1200, Collection of the Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai. 130 x 67 cm



## 17. Text and picture in manuscripts: what's rhetoric got to do with it?

Leslie Brubaker

Rhetoric, the art of persuasive public speaking, largely determined the ways words were used in public in Byzantium;<sup>1</sup> in writing, the type (or genre) of text being constructed determined what rhetorical technique was considered appropriate. Rhetoric is thus self-perpetuating: there are certain ways to talk (or write) about certain things, and each time that those ways are followed it becomes that much more the only way to talk (or write) about them. Repetition reinforces repetition. How objects were talked about in the Byzantine world, and particularly the rhetorical formulae of ekphrastic texts, has been the focus of a number of studies, some of which consider as well what happens when words are inscribed on the objects themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Buildings and sculptures can be inscribed with words, as can metalwork, mosaics, frescoes, and icons; even textiles sometimes have words embroidered on or woven into them. In any of these media, the relationship between the inscription and the image or the monument can be complex, but it never has the potential to become as intimate, complicated and comprehensive as the relationship between words and images in a manuscript can be. This relationship is perhaps most obvious in manuscripts where the miniatures share a page with the text, as for example on a page that Byzantinists know well, from the ninth-century Khludov Psalter (fig. 17.1).<sup>3</sup> St Peter is shown trampling on Simon Magus, who tried to buy apostolic power (Acts 8.9–24) above a parallel image of the iconophile patriarch Nikephoros (806–15) trampling on the iconoclast patriarch John the Grammarian (837–43). The miniaturist and scribe have worked together to make the connection between text and image clear:

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<sup>1</sup> ODB 3: 1788–90.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton, 1981), especially 22–52; L. James and R. Webb, "'To understand ultimate things and enter secret places': ekphrasis and art in Byzantium", *Art History* 14.1 (1991), 1–17; C. Barber, 'Writing on the body: memory, desire, and the holy in iconoclasm', in L. James, ed., *Desire and Denial in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 1999), 111–20.

<sup>3</sup> Moscow, Historical Museum, cod. 129, f. 51v; M.V. Ščepkina, *Miniaturi Khludovskoi Psalt'iri* (Moscow, 1977).

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lemmata connect particular passages with particular images, and inscriptions adjacent to the images explain the connection further (here 'Peter does away with Simon Magus on account of his love of money' beside the top image; 'Patriarch Nikephoros pointing out Iannes [John the Grammarian], the second Simon and iconoclast' beside the lower figures). The relationship nonetheless remains complex: an Old Testament text (Psalm 51.9) is illustrated with a New Testament scene (Peter and Simon), which is itself supplemented by a political commentary (the iconophiles vanquish the iconoclasts, and John is accused of simony).<sup>4</sup> It is difficult to imagine this degree of interaction in any other media.

The period in Byzantine history when the association between text and picture came under the greatest scrutiny was during and shortly after Iconoclasm. Between about 700 and about 900, the balance between the ways that words could communicate and the ways that images could communicate was the subject of considerable debate, and during Iconoclasm itself (c. 730–843) what we now call the theory or theology of icons was defined, theorized, and turned into a series of rhetorical tropes. The eighth and ninth centuries are thus full of words about images: from them we can extract for the first time the rhetoric of image theory; in them we can see how the rhetorical strategies used to authorize and valorize religious art were established.<sup>5</sup>

The intellectual history of the culture of images in Byzantium is well known, and we have, by now, a relatively sophisticated understanding of the issue.<sup>6</sup> The literary evidence is mostly polemical: when talking about images, even the Acts of the various church councils frequently follow rhetorical strategies made familiar in, for example, the anti-Jewish literature. One constant *leitmotif* is the importance of tradition. We are urged by the Seventh Ecumenical Council, held in Nicaea in 787, to 'introduce no innovations, but rather remain obedient to the teachings ... of the Fathers'.<sup>7</sup> Following this advice, I return to a problem that two Fathers of the study of Iconoclasm, André Grabar and Jean Gouillard, raised in

<sup>4</sup> K. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-century Byzantine Psalters* (Cambridge, 1992), 27–8.

<sup>5</sup> L. Brubaker, 'Byzantine art in the ninth century: theory, practice, and culture', *BMGS* 13 (1989), 23–93, especially 72–5; *eadem*, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-century Byzantium: image as exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, 1999), 19–58, especially 52–7.

<sup>6</sup> A. Cameron, 'The language of images: the rise of icons and Christian representation', in D. Wood, ed., *The Church and the Arts*, *Studies in Church History* 28 (Oxford, 1992), 1–42; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 19–58; L. Brubaker and J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (ca 680–850): the sources* (Aldershot, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Mansi 13, 208C; English trans. from D. Sahas, *Icon and Logos: sources in eighth-century Iconoclasm*, *Toronto Medieval Texts and Translations* 4 (Toronto, 1986), 52.

1957 and 1969, respectively.<sup>8</sup> That problem is the extent to which the words about images that became canonical by the end of Iconoclasm in 843 had an impact on artisanal production itself: in other words, to what extent did rhetoric about images during and around Iconoclasm affect making images during and after Iconoclasm? One must also ask whether there was what one might call a rhetoric of images, that is, a series of conventions that encapsulated a particular set of meanings and ultimately made any other visual pattern difficult to imagine, that developed in tandem with the rhetoric about images.

There are at least four spheres in which the rhetoric about images had a particularly significant impact on art after Iconoclasm, and each of these shows a different sort of relationship between words and images.

First, and most obviously, the iconoclast debates questioned the role of images. That this was the main issue is implicit in contemporary vocabulary, where the word most frequently used to describe the period was not Iconoclasm but Iconomachy — the image struggle — a term that evokes the process of determining the status of religious artifacts rather better than does Iconoclasm (the destruction of images). By 843, when the struggle officially ended, a working theology of sacred images had been forged, and this fundamentally changed the role of religious portraits in Orthodox Byzantium. Starting in the decades just before 700, the sacred portrait was, in effect, absorbed into the cult of relics, and was enabled to mediate between humanity and divinity in ways that only images that themselves partook in the nature of relics — the images not made by human hands and the pilgrim tokens, for example — had been able to do before. The practice was codified during Iconomachy, and was made canonical by the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787. Between c. 680 and c. 780 the function of sacred portraits changed fundamentally: icons became agents of intercession in a way that had previously been available only to relics.<sup>9</sup> The change was not initiated by rhetoric, but it was promoted and consolidated by it. The theory and theology of images that evolved during the eighth and ninth centuries followed practice, but iconophile texts quickly moved beyond a simple sanctification of the veneration of holy portraits; eighth- and early ninth-century authors such as John of Damascus, Nikephoros and, to a lesser extent, Theodore of Stoudios developed image systems that modified, restricted, and universalized the

<sup>8</sup> A. Grabar, *L'iconoclasm byzantin: dossier archéologique* (Paris, 1957); J. Gouillard, 'Art et littérature théologique à Byzance au lendemain de la querelle des images', *CCM* 12 (1969), 1–13.

<sup>9</sup> L. Brubaker, 'Icons before Iconoclasm?', *Morfologie sociali e culturali in europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo*, *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 45 (1998), 1215–54.

process of veneration.<sup>10</sup> Words did not cast practice in stone (*pace* the literacy theorists of the 1980s, writing does not, in Byzantium at least, fossilize public activity), but they justified the veneration of sacred portraits with sufficient authority that the 'image question' never recurred in the Orthodox church.

We should not, however, over-estimate or over-generalize the power of the pro-image rhetoric. With few exceptions (most notably the *Life of Stephen the Younger*, where it is probably significant that hagiography is infused with polemic),<sup>11</sup> saints' lives and miracle collections from the ninth century continue to attribute healings and miracles to the physical charisma of the saint present at his or her tomb,<sup>12</sup> or to the saint's appearance in dreams or visions, or to the medium of holy oil sanctified by divine presence at the saint's shrine — but not to icons. For example, in the panegyric on Theophanes the Confessor written by Theodore of Stoudios around 822, which includes a lengthy profession of the iconophile position, icons are never mentioned in connection with healings, which are attributed solely to oil from a sanctified lamp and to contact with the tomb.<sup>13</sup> The traditional mediators, oil and relics, have not been suppressed by the relative newcomer, however vehement the written defence of the icon had been and, in the 820s, still was, even in this text.<sup>14</sup> The extent to which this distinction responds to real practice is, however, problematic. In Theodore's praise of Theophanes, two rhetorical formulae — the hagiographic panegyric (on Theophanes) and the polemic (on icons) — are joined, and the icon polemic remains self-contained: the role and

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., P. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople: ecclesiastical policy and image worship in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford, 1958); M.-F. Auzépy, 'L'iconodoulie: défense de l'image ou de la dévotion à l'image?', in F. Boespflug and N. Lossky, eds, *Nicée II 787–1987: douze siècles d'images religieuses* (Paris, 1987), 157–65; *eadem*, 'L'évolution de l'attitude face au miracle à Byzance (VIIe–IXe siècle)', *Miracles, prodiges et merveilles au moyen âge* (Paris, 1995), 31–46; C. Barber, 'The Koimesis Church, Nicaea: the limits of representation on the eve of Iconoclasm', *JÖB* 41 (1991), 43–60; Brubaker, 'Byzantine art in the ninth century'; *eadem*, *Vision and Meaning*; K. Parry, 'Theodore Studites and the Patriarch Nicephoros on image-making as a Christian imperative', *Byzantion* 59 (1989), 164–83.

<sup>11</sup> M.-F. Auzépy, *La vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre: introduction, édition et traduction* (Aldershot, 1997); *eadem*, *L'hagiographie et l'iconoclisme Byzantin: le cas de la Vie d'Étienne le Jeune* (Aldershot, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Or an angel representing the saint: see G. Dagron, 'Le saint, le savant, l'astrologue. Étude de thèmes hagiographiques à travers quelques recueils de "Questions et réponses" des Ve–VIIe siècles', *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés (IVe–VIIe s.): Etudes augustiniennes* (1981), 149 (reprinted in *idem*, *La romanité chrétienne en Orient* [London, 1984], IV); *idem*, 'L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question, VIe–XIe siècle', *DOP* 46 (1992), 63.

<sup>13</sup> S. Efthymiadis, 'Le panégyrique de S. Théophane le confesseur par S. Théodore Stoudite (BHG 1792b)', *AB* 111 (1993), 282–3.

<sup>14</sup> Despite some arguments to the contrary, relics continue to be at least as important as icons throughout the Middle Byzantine period. See, e.g., N.P. Ševčenko, 'The Limbourg staurothek and its relics', in *Thymiama ste mneme tes Laskarinas Mpoura* (Athens, 1994), 289–94.

importance of the holy portrait is confirmed, but not demonstrated. Because the icon polemic reads like an intrusion, inserted into the narrative of the panegyric but not conceptually absorbed into its workings, the failure of Theophanes' portrait to heal might be attributed to rhetorical conservatism,<sup>15</sup> but it might equally be that this role had simply not yet attached itself to all icons. It is hard to determine here whether practice or theory lags behind.

A second sphere where Iconoclasm had a great impact on imagery was subject matter. As we have already seen, new, specifically anti-iconoclast imagery, often with precise parallels in polemical literature, appeared.<sup>16</sup> Other iconographical responses to the rhetoric of the iconomachy were less blatant. To cite a familiar example, because the incarnation was the major christological justification for religious imagery, portraits of Christ emphasized his humanity and his human form through such devices as replacing the long, body-covering *kolobion* with the more revealing loincloth at the Crucifixion (fig. 17.2);<sup>17</sup> the role of his human mother, Mary, was also newly emphasized.<sup>18</sup> Another consistent rhetorical trope was the invocation of prophetic visions to demonstrate that divinity could be visible, and to make the point that the coming of Christ (the incarnation, again) allowed all Christians to see divinity just as had the prophets of old. We duly find a great many examples of this theme in ninth-century manuscript illustration (fig. 17.3), which are chiefly distinguished from earlier examples by the invariable inclusion of the prophet himself — an addition which is necessary to make the same point as had been made in the iconophile texts, that humans could perceive divinity.<sup>19</sup> There are many other examples of post-iconoclast iconographies that find close parallels in the iconophile literature, but this selection will I hope suffice to indicate the impact of the rhetoric of Iconoclasm on religious imagery.

It also shows a different type of relationship between words and images. Whereas the establishment of a theology of icons in the eighth and ninth centuries was led by the practice of venerating holy portraits that had

<sup>15</sup> Might we see the image of the Crucifixion in Paris. gr. 510 (fig. 2), where Christ's original loincloth was soon overpainted with a *kolobion*, as a visual parallel? Bibliography in Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 291–302.

<sup>16</sup> See Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*.

<sup>17</sup> J. Martin, 'The dead Christ on the cross in Byzantine art', in K. Weitzmann, ed., *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend Jr.* (Princeton, 1955), 189–96; A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: the making of an image* (Princeton, 1986). In fig. 2, the loincloth was later painted over: see n. 16 above.

<sup>18</sup> See I. Kalavrezou, 'Images of the mother: when the Virgin Mary became *meter theou*', *DOP* 44 (1990), 165–72.

<sup>19</sup> Grabar, *L'iconoclisme*, 247–8; J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'Théophanes—visions auxquelles participent les prophètes dans l'art byzantine après la restauration des images', *Synthronon: art et archéologie de la fin de l'antiquité et du moyen âge* (Paris, 1968), 135–43; Brubaker, 'Byzantine art in the ninth century', 40–42; *eadem*, *Vision and Meaning*, 281–307, especially 288–90.

been established in the last two decades of the seventh century — theory followed practice — in the case of the iconographical changes summarized above, practice normally followed theory: the texts came first, and new iconographies followed.

A third way that manuscripts, in particular, were affected by the rhetoric of Iconoclasm was in their format. It is in the years immediately following the iconoclast debates that we find the first manuscripts with marginal miniatures.<sup>20</sup> These include the famous marginal psalters, of course, but also the copy of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos now in Milan and the Paris *florilegium* (a collection of citations arranged by subject) that goes by the name of the *Sacra Parallela* (fig. 17.4).<sup>21</sup> The marginal format was developed as a means of closely associating a primary text and the written or visual commentary that elucidated it, and seems to respond to the passion for correct interpretation that was such a striking feature of seventh- and, especially, eighth-century texts.<sup>22</sup> As we have seen, in the Khludov Psalter (and other marginal psalters) the marginal format allows precise coordination of commentary image and original text. In the *Sacra Parallela*, the format allows a slightly different sort of juxtaposition. Here, the marginal portraits authenticate the accuracy of the quotations found in the text. Some simply rely on their medallion format to indicate their role as a seal of approval, while others are more overt, and portray the authors holding open their own texts as if to disgorge their imprimaturs on the new page or show the author actually writing in the manuscript itself (fig. 17.5).<sup>23</sup>

In the *Sacra Parallela*, the miniatures respond to a literary genre (the *florilegium*) and to a rhetorical convention (the demands for authentic texts). In so doing, they move beyond illustration of the text. Following the marginal format that signalled 'commentary', the images are used to resolve an issue of text-criticism: the authorizing images validate the accuracy of the quotations that provide the written section of the page.

The rise of icon theory, the shifts in subject matter, and the use of marginal images to authorize particular theological interpretations through the physical proximity of word and picture are the most overt ways that rhetoric of the iconomachy affected ninth-century imagery. Comparison of a 'classic' post-iconoclast miniature with an equally 'classic' pre-iconoclast

<sup>20</sup> Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 104–11.

<sup>21</sup> Milan, Ambrosiana E.49/50 inf. and Paris. gr. 923; the miniatures of both were published, respectively, in A. Grabar, *Les miniatures du Grégoire de Nazianze de l'Ambrosienne* (Ambrosiana 49–50) (Paris, 1943) and K. Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela, Parisinus Graecus 923* (Princeton, 1979).

<sup>22</sup> Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 108–10; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 35–6.

<sup>23</sup> Brubaker, 'Byzantine art in the ninth century', 72–5; *eadem*, *Vision and Meaning*, 52–7.

one recapitulates these three spheres and introduces a new and less familiar one.<sup>24</sup>

The Rossano Gospels (fig. 17.6) is a de luxe sixth-century manuscript produced somewhere in the Greek-speaking world.<sup>25</sup> Its six opening folios were originally devoted to illustrations, one on each side (so twelve in all), and the first ten of these followed the same pattern, with an episode from Christ's passion above four figures from the Old Testament, each accompanied by a text panel that is often identified as a scroll, though there is no real indication that such an interpretation was intended.<sup>26</sup> On the page reproduced here, the Gospel scene is the Raising of Lazarus, the episode that opens the passion narrative; the figures below are the Old Testament figures David, Hosea, David again and Isaiah, accompanied by excerpts from their own writings that were read in the liturgy during the feast of the Raising of Lazarus. These are the prefigurative passages that, to Orthodox Christians, demonstrated that the Old Testament was a truly Christian text because, interpreted properly, it forecast events of the New Testament. To put it slightly differently, these were the types of passages that allowed Christianity to appropriate the Old Testament. What we have here, in other words, is an image where:

1. Old Testament texts and portraits are used to supplement a New Testament visual narrative.
2. The images are divorced from the written narrative — they stand on their own before the opening of the text proper — though the passion cycle itself stems directly from the Gospels that follow.
3. The entire composition depends on a liturgical framework: it is a visualization of the liturgy for the Saturday of Saint Lazarus.

The Khludov Psalter (fig. 17.7) was made in Constantinople, probably between 843 and 847, in other words, immediately after the end of Iconoclasm. Here, the images are distributed throughout the manuscript. As we have seen already on the Simon Magus page (fig. 17.1), figure 17.7 also shows a New Testament interpretation (the Crucifixion) of an Old Testament text (Psalm 68.22, 'They gave me also gall for my food and made me drink vinegar for my thirst') and, below that, a contemporary parallel

<sup>24</sup> The series of points made below are not restricted to the two miniatures compared here, which are used as paradigms primarily in the interests of space.

<sup>25</sup> Rossano, Diocesan Treasury: G. Cavallo, J. Gribomont and W. Loerke, *I vangeli di Rossano: le miniature / The Rossano Gospels: the miniatures* (Rome, 1987). I do not, however, share these authors' belief that some of the miniatures derived from wall paintings.

<sup>26</sup> There is also a frontispiece to the concordance (now f. 5r) and a portrait of St Mark (f. 121r); presumably the other evangelists were also once pictured. Reproductions in the edition cited in the preceding note.

(two iconoclasts whitewashing an icon).<sup>27</sup> Both of these scenes are accompanied by explanatory inscriptions: 'they [mixed] vinegar and gall' next to the Crucifixion, 'they mixed water and lime on his face' next to the iconoclasts defacing the icon of Christ. What we have here is an image where:

1. New Testament images are used to supplement an Old Testament text (sometimes, though not in the two examples examined here, the Old Testament narrative is also visualized).
2. The images are embedded in the text, and linked firmly to it through lemmata and captions.
3. The composition depends on an exegetical and polemical framework. It is, in part, a visualization of commentaries on the Psalms (some of which were also incorporated into the liturgy, and some of which also formed part of the anti-heretical arsenal that was developed during the seventh century). It is also, however, an explicit political statement, a condemnation of the iconoclasts.

The similarities between pages in the Rossano Gospels and in the Khludov Psalter are fairly clear. Both combine text and image on a single page; both join together elements from the Old Testament and the New; both manage to communicate visually ideas and concepts that go beyond what is written on the page; both depend on a certain hierarchy of layout; and both use images to express a familiarity with texts other than the one illustrated.

The differences are also obvious. For a start, the format is different, and the relationship between words and images, which is relatively simple and direct in the Gospelbook, has become far more complex in the Psalter. Further, in the Rossano Gospels, Old Testament imagery supports and enhances a New Testament narrative; in the Khludov Psalter, New Testament imagery supports and enhances an Old Testament text. And finally, the liturgical relationship established by portraits and texts in the Gospelbook is supplemented by visual typologies and visual polemic in the Psalter.

From this sequence of similarities and differences, we can extract some general points. The use of image as exegesis was not an invention of the ninth century — the system appears already, albeit in a fairly rudimentary form, in the Rossano Gospels. The sixth-century Gospelbook also makes it clear that, despite some recent arguments to the contrary, the use of imagery in a liturgical formulation was not an invention of the ninth century. There are, however, distinct differences in the ways that Old

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<sup>27</sup> Moscow, Historical Museum, cod. 129, f. 67r; Ščepkina, *Miniaturi Khludovskoi Psalt'iri*; commentary and earlier bibliography in Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 30.

Testament and New Testament narratives are handled; and while there are contemporary, topical references in both the Psalter and in the Gospelbook, in the Gospelbook it is liturgical imagery, familiar to all Byzantine churchgoers, that supplements the biblical narrative, while in the Psalter, and in other manuscripts of the ninth century, what is new is the intrusion of contemporary historical concerns into biblical chronicles. Finally, the marginal format of the Psalter signals a new conception of the relationship between words and images that surfaces in other ninth-century manuscripts (though it is not always carried by this format).

In fact, the role of images was hugely strengthened vis-à-vis words in the aftermath of Iconoclasm. As we have seen in the *Sacra Parallela*, this comes out in particular configurations of imagery, but it is also evident in the rhetorical strategy employed by the iconophiles where, for the first time, the primacy of sight is expressed in theological terms.<sup>28</sup> In both texts and images, this was a short-lived phenomenon, but it was nonetheless a genuine response to the iconomachy that was expressed both visually and verbally.

There are two larger points that we can draw from the comparison between the Rossano Gospels and the Khludov Psalter. First, what we see in the Psalter, and in other manuscripts of the ninth century, is the interweaving of mundane history and the divine economy. The Khludov images provide obvious visual examples, but we have also noted the insertion of portraits of prophets into images of visions, which again insists on the historical validity of divine revelation. This, as we have seen, finds direct parallels in iconophile rhetoric. To see contemporary history as part of a larger continuum of God's plan was not new to the ninth century. What is new is the participation of images, which now play an active role in communicating that continuum.

The second point concerns the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Here, again, there is a broad parallel between rhetoric and imagery: in both, there is a distinct shift, over the course of Iconoclasm, in the ways that the Old and New Testament are dealt with. The iconoclast debate, in tandem with the anti-heretical literature of, particularly, the eighth and ninth centuries, firmly subordinated the Old Testament to the New: throughout the writings of the major iconophile authors, the Old Testament is valued not in its own right but as a prefiguration of Christian realizations. This interpretation of the Old Testament was not invented in the seventh, eighth or ninth century, but it becomes far more explicit, more frequently evoked, and increasingly pejorative (and sometimes nasty) from the eighth century.

The same is true of ninth-century imagery. In the Rossano Gospels, the Old Testament supports the New in a pattern sanctioned by the liturgy. In

<sup>28</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 48–9.



the Khludov Psalter, a New Testament image (in the two pages looked at here, Peter trampling Simon Magus and the Crucifixion) completely supplants whatever Old Testament illustration might otherwise have been provided. To use a different example, the entire thrust of the ninth-century additions made to the pictorial cycle of a major ninth-century manuscript that has not yet been mentioned, the *Christian Topography* in the Vatican, was, precisely, the christianization of Old Testament symbols.<sup>29</sup>

The point of all this is that rhetoric and images are inextricably intertwined. But they are intertwined not because one trots along after the other: the relationship is far more complex than that. On a very basic level, rhetoric and imagery are intertwined because they are both ways of channelling messages: they are both media of communication, and they are, on the whole, being produced for the same constituency. The rhetoric about images during Iconoclasm affected the making of images after Iconoclasm in some profound ways; but the images themselves prompted the rhetoric in the first place: the relationship between the two cannot be separated cleanly, in part because even when text and image attempted to communicate the same message, the difference in medium ensured that they did it differently.

We have ignored a question asked early on in this paper about whether there was a 'rhetoric' of images, in part because it is artificial to apply linguistic considerations to visual messages, but also because the study of visual conventions and 'the art of persuasive public visualizations' (to paraphrase the definition of verbal rhetoric offered by the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* that was fronted at the beginning of this paper) has been so little studied. That some facets of imagery changed after Iconoclasm, and temporarily responded to a set of issues that artisans and/or their patrons had not considered before, is incontestable — that is what makes the second half of the ninth century a topic fascinating to modern minds conditioned to the visual vicissitudes of the media age we now live in. And that certain patterns repeat themselves over and over in the second half of the ninth century is equally clear; some, but by no means all, of them have been considered in this paper. Rhetoric presumes an informed audience, people who will know how to appreciate the speaker's or writer's skill; we can probably assume the same of the audience for imagery. But we cannot assume that the artisans who produced the miniatures we have concentrated on had the same ambitions as the iconophile authors who wrote the theory of images. They were far less self-conscious, for painting had none of the pretensions to the expression of status that writing had: unlike handbooks of rhetoric, handbooks of painting do not exist in Byzantium. There may be a 'rhetoric' (or its visual equivalent) of painting,

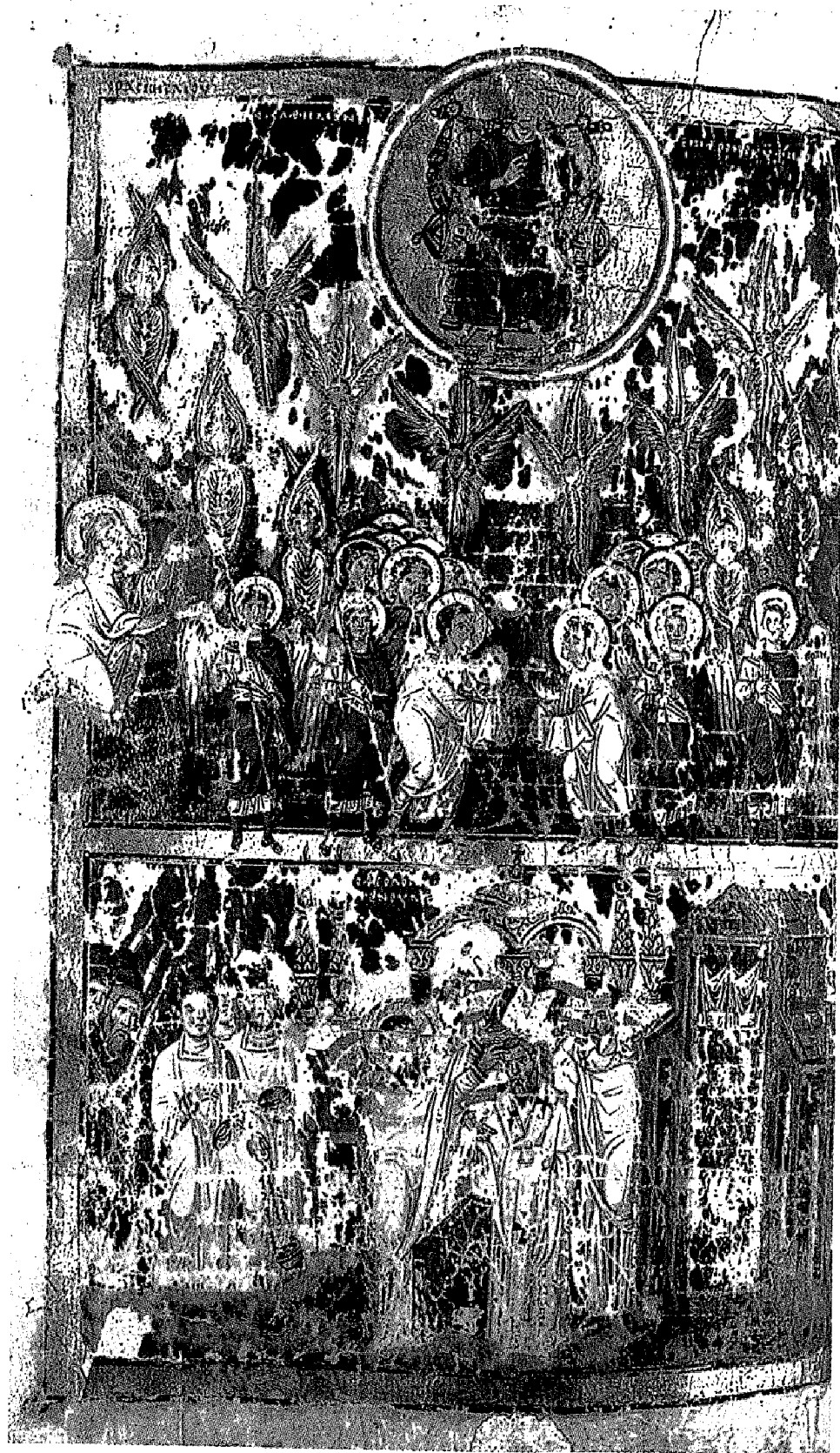
<sup>29</sup> Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, gr. 699. Miniatures reproduced in C. Stornajolo, *Le miniature della Topografia Cristiana di Cosma Indicopleuste. Codice vaticano greco 699* (Milan, 1908).

but there were no rhetoricians. There were artisans, not artists — and this is perhaps why Byzantine visual imagery has proved so much more enduring than its literature.



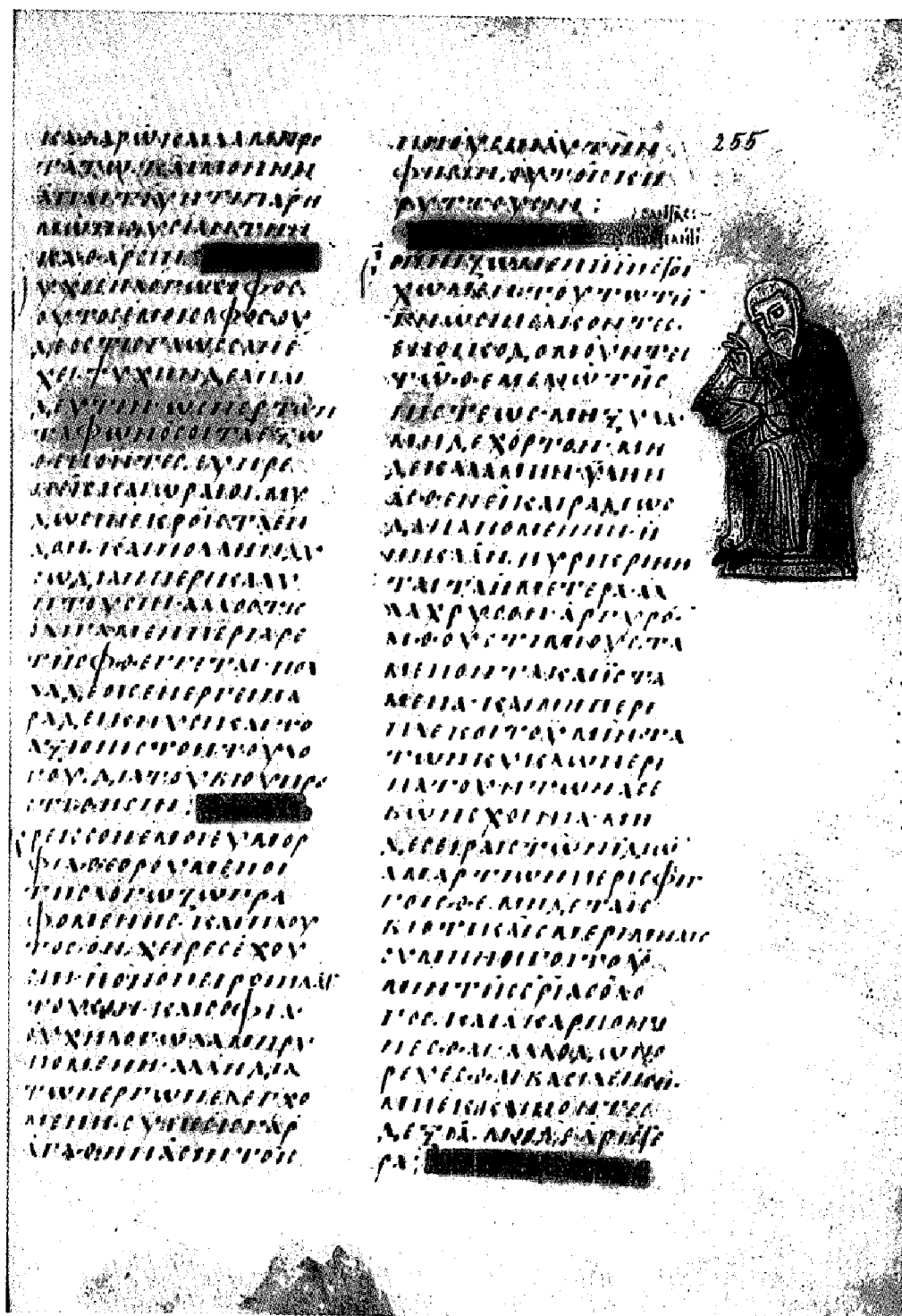


17.2 Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos: Crucifixion, Deposition, Entombment and Chairete (Paris. gr. 510, f. 30v)

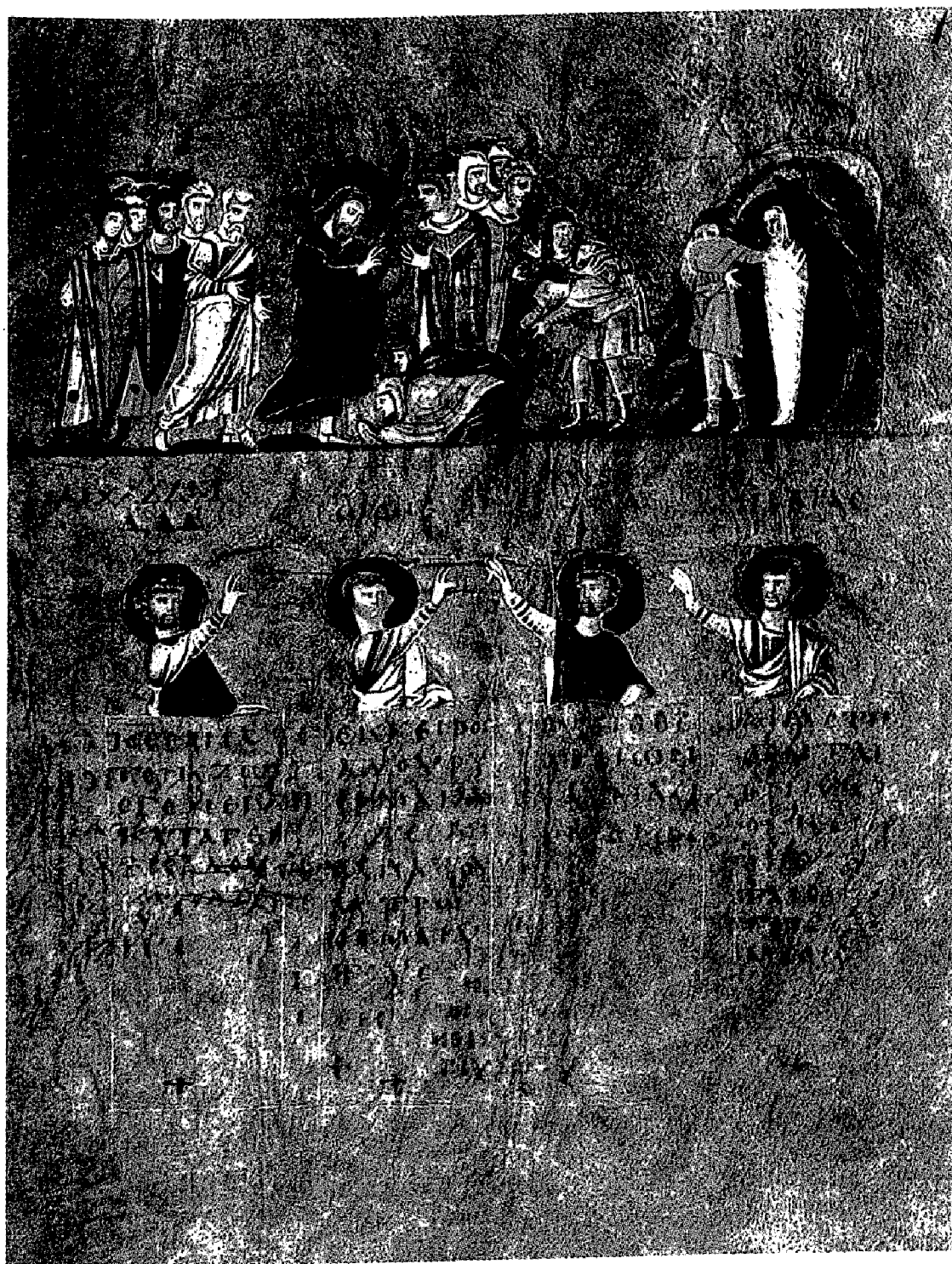


17.3 Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos: Vision of Isaiah (Paris. gr. 510, f. 67v)



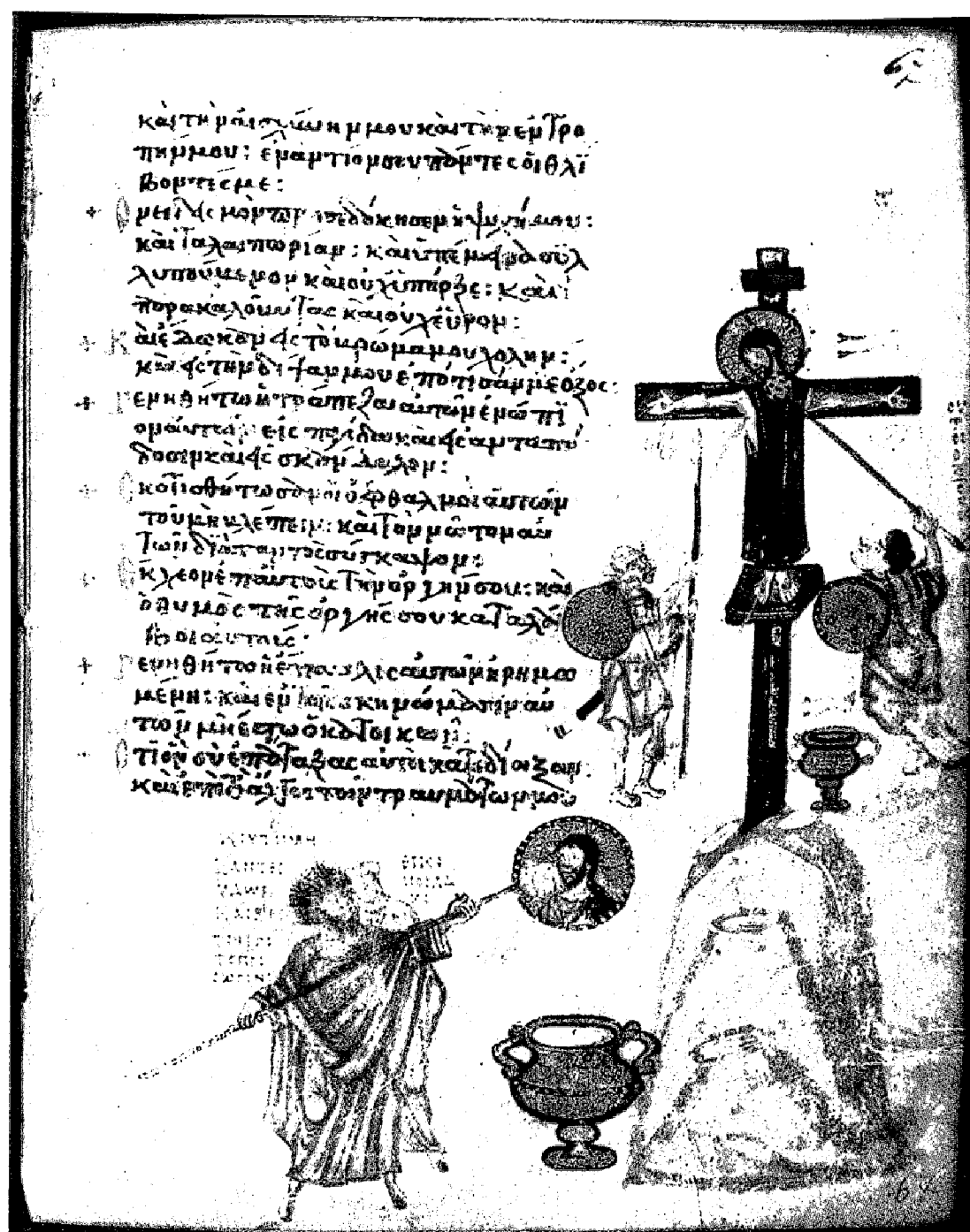






17.6 Rossano Gospel: Raising of Lazarus, with David, Hosea, David and Isaiah (Rossano, Diocesan Museum, f. 1r)





17.7 Khludov Psalter: Crucifixion, iconoclasts whitewash an icon of Christ (Moscow, Historical Museum, cod. 129, f. 67r)

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